Commentary

Volume Fifty-One, Number One, January 1971

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Books in Review: Joseph Epstein, Johanna Kaplan, Hillel Halkin, Herbert N. Schneidau

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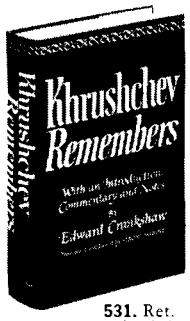

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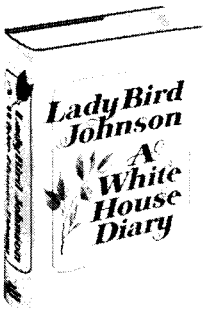

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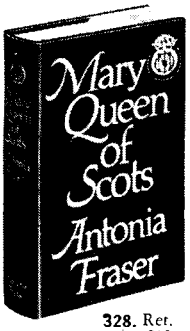

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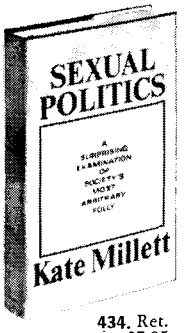

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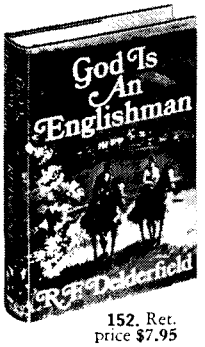

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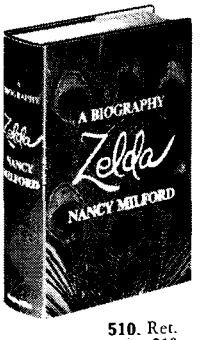

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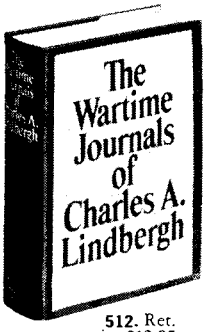

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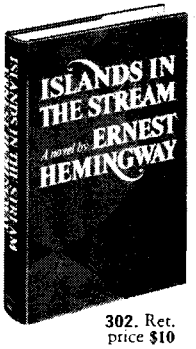

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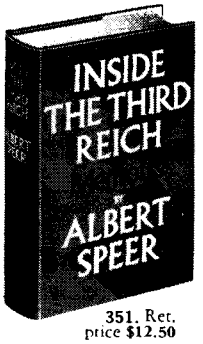

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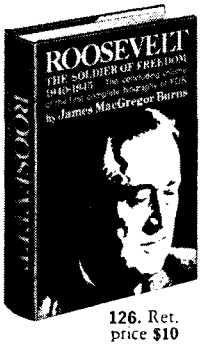

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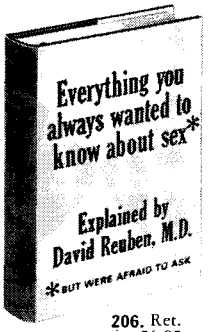

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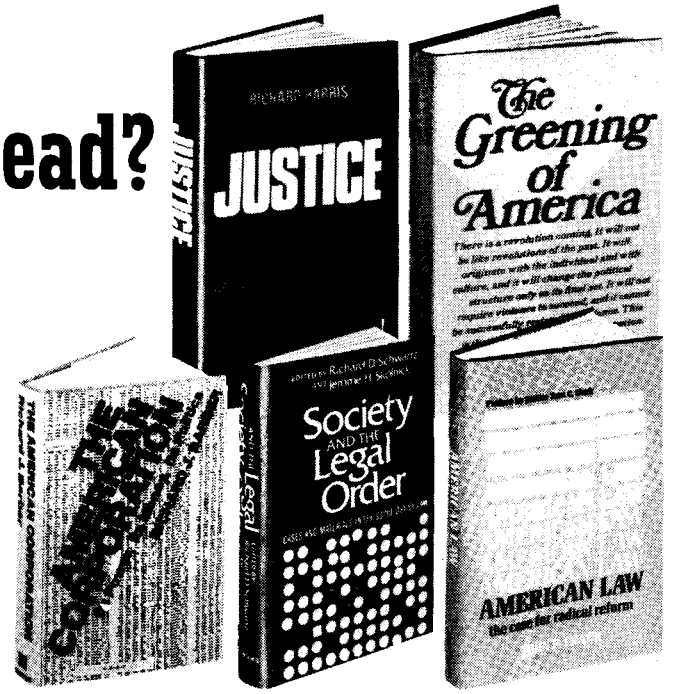

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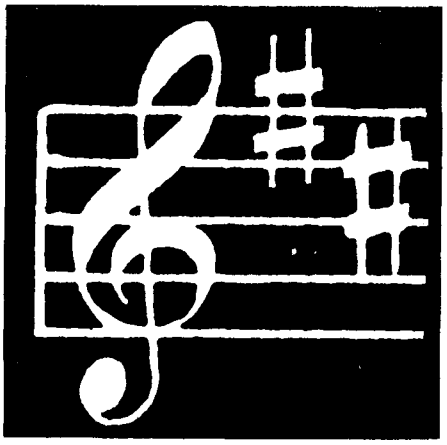

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Issues

Redemption Through Politics

Norman Podhoretz

FOR ME—though I would imagine that much the same would be true for anyone who has been living with at least some degree of intellectual alertness through the polemical agitations of this highly politicized era in which we all unhappily find ourselves—the experience of reading Gershom Scholem's "The Holiness of Sin" (p. 41) was rather like having an amplified carillon implanted inside my head, so many bells did this account of a remote Jewish sect, remote in time and apparently remote in its preoccupations, ring in my mind and so loudly did they reverberate throughout my entire being.

In the 1930's, when "The Holiness of Sin" was first published, the quip became popular among those who knew enough Hebrew to read it that Scholem had produced the most illuminating analysis anyone had yet done of the Stalinist mentality, particularly as that mentality was responding to such shocks as the massacre of the kulaks, the Moscow Trials, the purges, and the Hitler-Stalin pact. Scholem, of course, made no explicit comparisons himself and was almost certainly not thinking consciously of Stalinism at all. Nevertheless, a reader of "The Holiness of Sin" in 1937 would have had to be very narrowly focused indeed in his thinking to miss the breathtaking similarities between the kinds of arguments the Sabbatians used in denying that the conversion of Sabbatai Zevi to Islam proved that he was not after all the Messiah of the Jews, and the arguments employed by the Stalinists in trying to persuade themselves against all the evidence of the senses that a socialist revolution was in fact being fulfilled in the Soviet Union under Stalin. Today we are not so likely to dwell on those similarities, but we are just as likely to be struck by another set of equally astonishing contemporary resonances having to do with the basic doctrine of the holiness of sin itself or, as the Sabbatians generally put it, the idea that the violation of the Law is its true fulfillment.

WHEN THE Sabbatians spoke of the Law, they specifically meant the Torah, the Commandments, but as Scholem's account makes unmistakably clear, they also meant something not very different from what the term "Establishment" has come to signify in our time. It included, that is, all traditional forms, customs, and institutions, together with all classes of people who supported or sustained them. In repudiating the Law in this sense, the Sabbatians—some in public practice or through conversion, some as "voluntary Marranos" in secret, and some only in the privacy of their own minds—were actually repudiating not rabbinic Judaism (though they were also doing that) but Judaism of any variety. In other words, whatever else they wished to be and whatever they may have told themselves they wished to be and with whatever degree of candor they may have told it to themselves, they did not wish to be Jews. How can one fail to be reminded in reading about these people of the type of revolutionist in America today who declares that the authority of this society is illegitimate and that the

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law must therefore be resisted and indeed violated if it is to be truly fulfilled? Are not these revolutionists, in addition to repudiating the American social order as concretely and existentially constituted—under cover to be sure of the claim, which they make perhaps as much to themselves as to others, that they represent the true American Constitution—are they not expressing with varying degrees of candor and without necessarily wishing to "convert" to any other national identity, the yearning *not* to be Americans? (Alexander Bickel's piece about the Chicago conspiracy trial on p. 31 is, as the saying goes, nothing if not relevant here, bathetic though the comparison between Nathan of Gaza and a vice president of Random House may seem to some.)

I myself, at any rate, find the parallel dizzyingly suggestive, and a thousand others like it will occur to every attentive reader of Scholem's essay. But my intention here is not to put forward any such vulgar proposal as that the history of the Sabbatian movement be seen as an exact or even as an approximate prefiguring of the ideological battles taking place in American political life today. What I do want to propose, however, flows directly from the fact that these parallels can plausibly be drawn with so little violence to the integrity of the immense differences between the two situations. For if the story of a distant religious movement can tell us so much about the political storms by which we ourselves are being battered, then surely those scholars (men like Hans Jonas, Norman Cohn, J. L. Talmon, and of course Gershom Scholem) have been right all along in their understanding of large areas of contemporary political thought and behavior as the acting-out in secular guise of impulses and conflicts which are actually religious rather than political in character. Nor is this merely an "academic" point. "If they want a sense of purpose," said Harold Macmillan when he was Prime Minister of England, "let them go to their bishops." The trouble is that when they do go to their bishops nowadays, they are sent right back to the Macmillans with the bishops leading the way.

Yet the fact remains that the religious impulse cannot in the nature of things be satisfied within the political order any more than religious ideas can be adequately expressed within the social order; and the effort to make politics do what only religion for better or worse can do invariably puts those who engage in this profoundly unholy effort directly in the way of the diabolical temptation that some of us still know as totalitarianism, though it may travel, in neatly analogous accordance with the principle that the violation of the Law is now its true fulfillment, under many other seductively sweet-sounding names.

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Robert Alter *Nathan Glazer* *Walter Laqueur*
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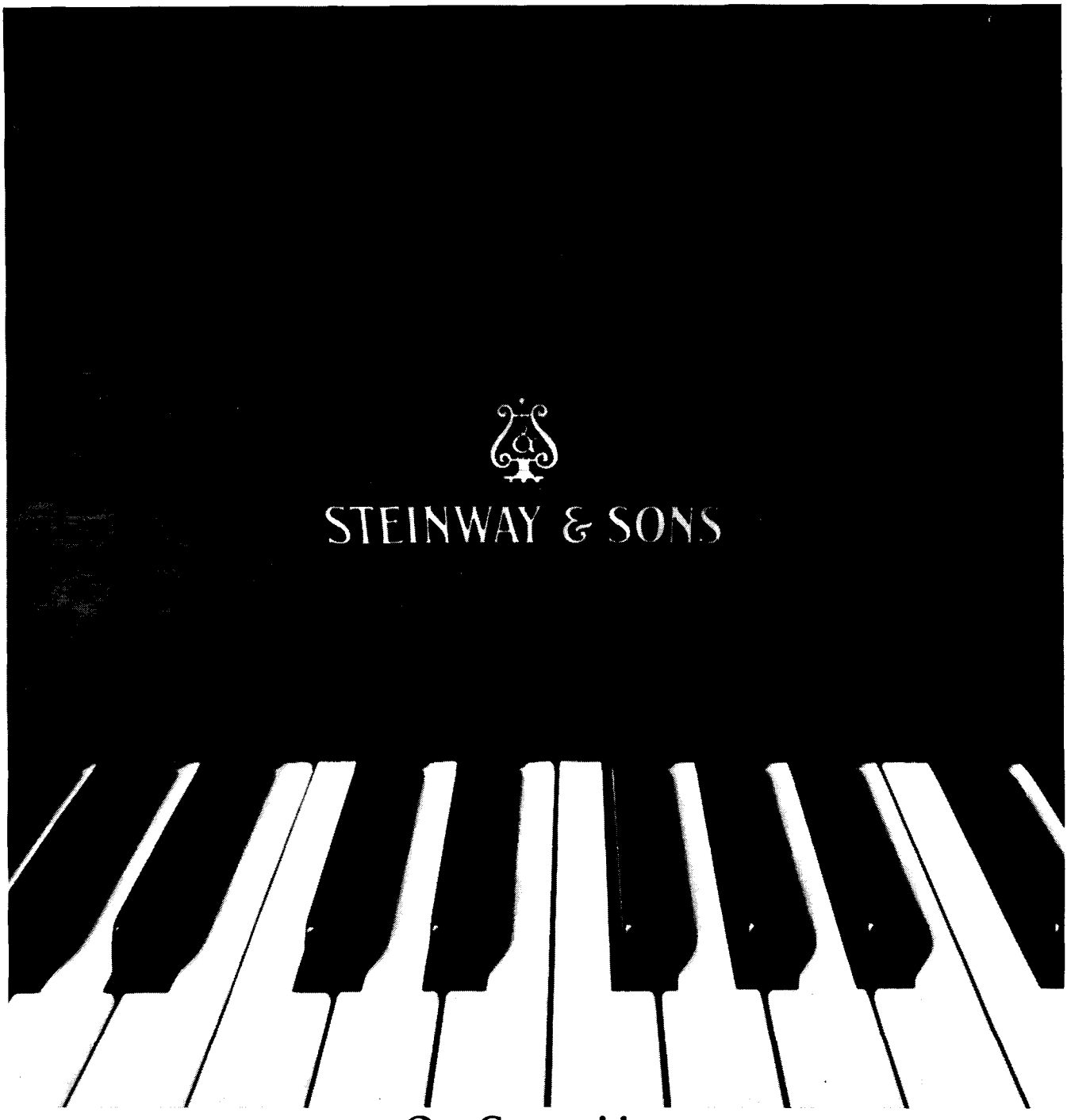

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Letters from Readers

Criticism & Identity

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Robert Alter's "Eliot, Lawrence, and the Jews" [October 1970] is one of the most penetrating and thoughtful essays in criticism that I have read in a long time. The section on Lawrence, brief as it is, is the first satisfactory attempt in all the vast accumulation of Lawrence criticism that we now have to get at the root and the function of Lawrence's attitude toward Jews. The section on Eliot enables me at last to formulate the uneasiness that so much of Eliot has always made me feel. The learning, carried so gracefully, that illuminates the reading of "Burbank," is most impressive, but the way that it enables Mr. Alter to make his conclusions about Lawrence and tradition is nothing less than beautiful.

MARK SCHORER
Berkeley, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"People who shrilly insist on the uniqueness of their own identity are likely to be insecure about it; groups that must forever affirm their own exclusiveness are almost certain to have inner doubts about their coherence or collective validity." Where he states this, in his interesting article, Robert Alter gives as his example the Germans. He might have chosen a group nearer home. . . .

ANTHONY RUDOLF
European Judaism
London, England

ROBERT ALTER writes:

Anthony Rudolf will be happy to learn that my generalization in fact was intended to include all groups, near and far, from nations and races to literary coteries.

Author's Puzzlement

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Herbert N. Schneidau's review of my book, *The New Reformation* [November 1970], was not unfriendly, and I raise the following point in sincere puzzlement: By actual (generous) count, about 60 pages of the book have a direct or indirect connection with the Youth Movement. This is much less than a third of the whole, and my preface has the same proportion. I thought I was writing about the history and ethics of technology, the nature of pedagogy and teaching language, the problem of legitimacy and popular sovereignty in modern conditions; and I tried to draw from these topics a kind of conservative manifesto.

The reviewer, however, writes as if the book were almost entirely about my wry relation to young dissenters, which is an interesting topic but not very interesting to me. I am really interested in hearing criticism of my views on the ethics of technology, the plight of democratic legitimacy, etc. How will I learn this if all I am told is that I "continue to think creatively and concretely"?

I am reminded of the reviews of *Five Years*. In that book, by actual (generous) count, less than one-seventh had any relation to sexual matters at all, yet every review concentrated almost entirely on some monstrous sexual revelations which occupied even much less space in the book. The book was primarily on Method.

I wrote a book called *Growing Up Absurd*—I have published 28 others, only one of which is on a youth theme. Is it honorable to treat a writer as a pawn in some game?

Will Herbert N. Schneidau tell me what gives with reviewers that they do this kind of thing?

PAUL GOODMAN
New York City

HERBERT N. SCHNEIDAU writes:

I'm not surprised that Paul Goodman wishes his relationship with young dissenters played down; as I said, his is a peculiarly uncomfortable position. But as a reviewer I must indicate why a book is significant in the first place, and here that relationship is of consuming interest. Speaking of overselectivity, Mr. Goodman writes as if my review were "almost entirely about [his] wry relation to young dissenters," whereas I thought I spent my real energy supporting his insight about the analogy with the Reformation, which after all furnishes the title and therefore has some claim to being the organizing principle of the book.

The fact is, and this book

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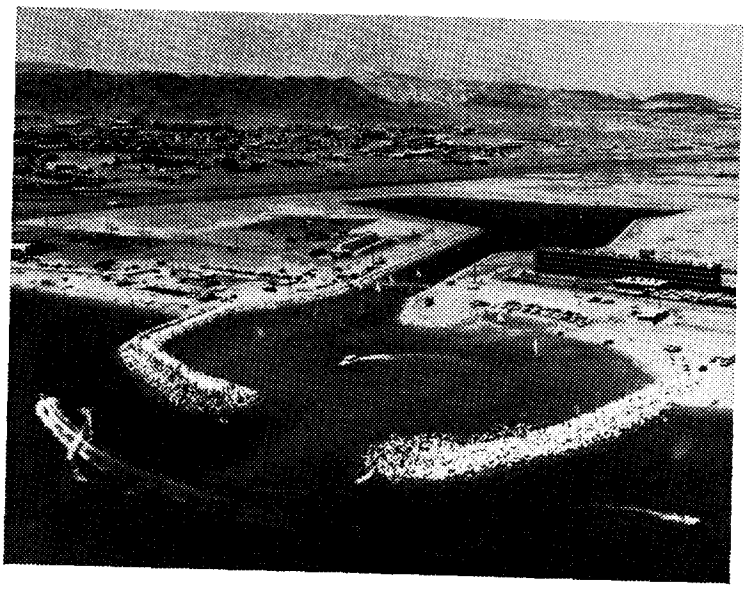

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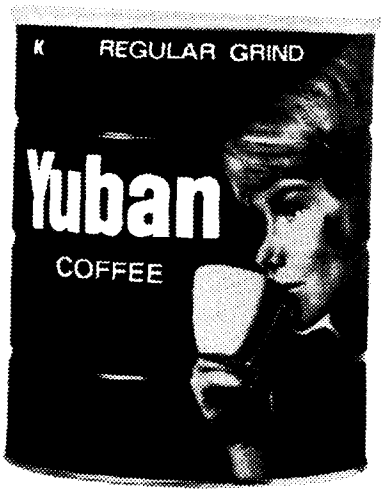

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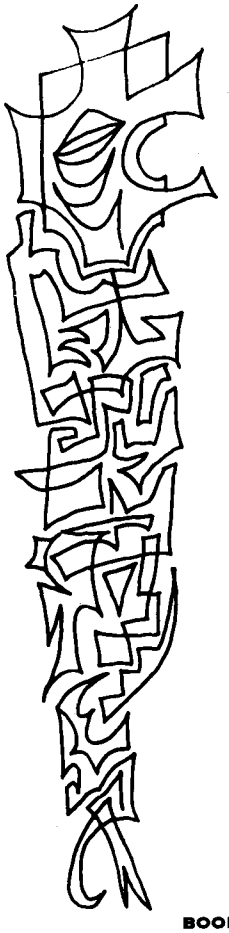
makes it clear, that Mr. Goodman is much more worthy of regard as a cultural historian than as the Mr. Fixit of our problems that he sometimes takes himself to be. I don't see how any intelligent reader can fail to be fascinated and instructed by his intermittent account of trying to bring the zeal of young activists into some useful relation with our culture. These passages form a significant slice of the cultural history of our time; they reveal more about youthcult than most other statements, Strawberry, or Port Huron, or what have you. And it is only in them that Mr. Goodman establishes his authority to speak, sometimes usefully, and sometimes merely sentimentally, on the cultural problems he poses.

The real question is not whether I, or COMMENTARY readers, will pay attention to his "conservative manifesto" but whether his young friends will. We can all learn something from Mr. Goodman, but they have by far the most to learn, and even Mr. Goodman's most elementary observations would help them. But, as I indicated, the book itself teaches us that these young antinomians will see Mr. Goodman's measures as Pelagian palliatives, and therefore a worldly "sell-out." The anomalies of this situation—that of the prophet who cannot be heard by his own disciples—override in importance the content of any of Mr. Goodman's proposals; this paradox may become fateful for all of us, as the greeners of America become more numerous. Let those who have ears to hear, hear.



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The Black Panthers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Tom Milstein, in his perceptive article on the Panthers ["A Perspective on the Panthers," September 1970], gives us a searching and persuasive analysis of the Black Panther party, but in doing so makes assumptions that will not stand the test of objective analysis. He contends that there is a strong affinity, or even some form of alliance, between the "business Establishment" and the extreme Negro nationalist groups, in which category he places the Panthers. While he indicates that he does not mean to imply that a "conspiracy" is involved in this relationship, he nevertheless proceeds to build a case for the existence of a plan that may be so interpreted.

I give but one illustration: in discussing Paul Feldman's article on the Panthers which appeared in *Dissent,* Mr. Milstein states: "He [Feldman] of course had no way of anticipating that business would rush in to subsidize the nationalists together with their program as a means of setting the ghetto community, the ethnic minorities, and the labor movement at each others' throats." In this aim Mr. Milstein includes, in addition to the industrial corporations, the mass media (making special mention of the New York *Times*), and TV and radio. Mr. Milstein further asserts that the business hierarchy wanted to block the transition of the civil-rights movement from the legal stage to a stage which would lead to true economic equality. He contends that the alignment between business and the Panthers defeats this objective.

We should keep in mind, however, that the current nationalist movement among the black people in the United States is a misdirected outcome of the increased ethnic consciousness that expresses itself in group identity. This trend is discernible in practically all of our American ethnic groups. The Puerto Rican community with its Aspira

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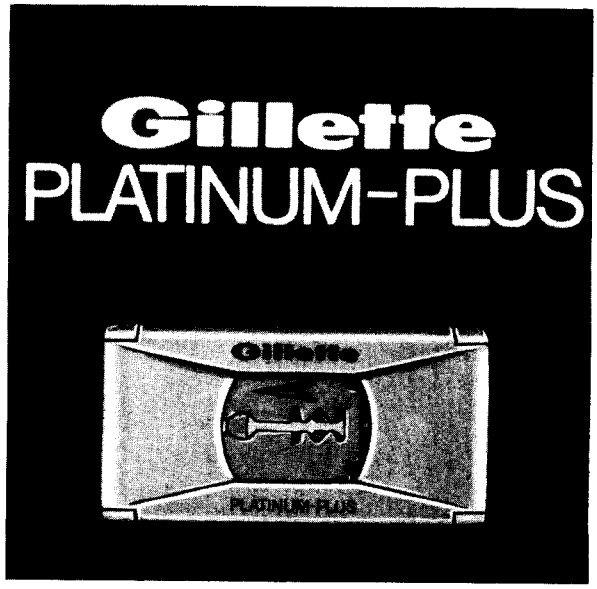

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program is a good example. In the case of the Negro, the emergence of the African nations has been an additional impetus. Self-help and mutual aid are by-products of this manifestation. A force is generated within the group in the direction of upward mobility on behalf of its members. There ensues a surefootedness from this cohesiveness that is gratifying and strengthening.

The term "Black Power" unfortunately has assumed a nefarious and confused connotation, both because of the manner in which Stokely Carmichael impulsively announced it in 1966 and the subsequent distortion of the true significance of the concept. But "Black Power" need not connote either violence or separateness. The term has been made into a slogan and in the process its meaning has been distorted. The basic meaning of "Black Power" is that the black community needs to achieve strength, largely by its own efforts, in the economic, educational, and social sectors. In the process of achieving these goals, the group may concentrate on "doing it alone" as a transitional process.

At about the time the required strength is achieved, integration may naturally take place on a plane of equality and not by means of supplication. Integration (not amalgamation) so achieved does not have to be forced. This has been the experience with all our ethnic groups.

To be sure, massive assistance in providing the necessary funds will be required for the black community from government and from other outside sources such as foundations, as well as through individual contributions from members of the group itself. However, the right of decision and the authority to shape policy should rest with the ethnic, racial, religious, or national group.

It is also conceivable that the so-called "business Establishment" is more receptive to an approach that savors of "pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps," than to having the government undertake the entire responsibility. Would this not be in keeping with the adherence of business to the free enterprise system without there being the additional motivation of a planned effort to thwart the maturation of the civil-rights movement?

I am inclined to agree with Norman Podhoretz's interpretation ["Revolutionary Suicide," September 1970] that the Black Panther movement is an expression of the radical movement of the 60's rather than the black movement of that period. This is likely so because there is a close affinity between the Panthers and the extreme radical Left groups among the whites, including the Communists. This affinity is an ideological one and cuts across racial lines.

The prominence given the activities of the Panthers by the mass media is simply due to the latter's customary exploitation of sensationalism. The mass media seem to thrive on attention-getting potential which is just what the Panthers want. But I do not believe that there is any planned evil design on the part of the media, as Mr. Milstein seems to infer.

It is true that there is an inclination by the established groups to fear the rage of the dispossessed and hence, at times unwisely, to make concessions to avoid threatened destructive action. But this is far from being motivated by a design to "derail the civil-rights movement."

JOHN SLAWSON
Executive Vice-President Emeritus
The American Jewish Committee
New York City

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To the Editor of Commentary:

Tom Milstein's article may serve as a necessary antidote to the tendency to brush aside Black Panther rhetoric while taking seriously their breakfast programs and assertions of organized persecution. Yet when all is done we may find, and not for the first time in history, that rhetoric was *the* important thing. When young toughs set out to off-the-pig in Philadelphia, Omaha, Berkeley, or wherever, they may or may not be enrolled Panthers, but it takes little imagination to see the source of their inspiration.

Mr. Milstein is straining more than a little, though, when he finds an alliance between the Panthers and a "conservative business Establishment" providing "financial and moral support for black nationalism" in order "to frighten solid majorities of Americans into the conservative camp" and thus preserve "an economic order which perpetuates its wealth and power."

If officials of the Young People's Socialist League need to think like that to make their case against the Panthers, I guess it's OK with me. . . . Minds of a less exquisite order might also note the cast of his cabal, including the TV networks, the billion-dollar foundations, the mayor of New York, and college presidents. With reactionaries like these, who needs liberals, let alone liberal activists oriented to the intellectual?

Marxism is too cramped, it seems, to express Mr. Milstein's eminently sound instinct: that the Panthers are significant not for what they tell us about the black community, but for what they tell us about the white community. Scarcely anyone can be surprised that such a group should fester in the sores of discrimination and slums, but we are entitled to some surprise that it should enjoy the extraordinary cachet it has among those who suffer neither.

The source of this cachet is by far the most intriguing question raised by the Panthers. . . . Obviously, it stems at various levels from the killing of Panthers in the Chicago police raid, guilt at the historic mistreatment of blacks, the war, and other torments of the decade. For all that, one can sense that there are other ingredients still to be explained.

One important one, I'm starting to suspect, is a perverse interaction between the intellectual's traditional alienation from middle-class society and his soaring status within that society during the 1960's. The more he is accepted by society, as Richard Hofstadter pointed out as long ago as 1963, the more he must prove his independence by striking postures critical of it. And when the middle class itself grows bored with economic status-badges and starts to seek less material ones, it finds these postures easy and convenient to ape.

Robert L. Bartley
Brooklyn, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

I should like to protest against the wicked demagogy of Tom Milstein's article. The prime example of this is his conclusion, analogizing an alleged Panther-Communist-party hook-up to Mafia terrorism. This is a sheer Birchite fantasy. Obviously the Panthers are one of many small ghetto groups, and obviously, too, if the police offensive against the Panthers continues, nobody but the Panthers themselves need have anything to fear. . . . Toward the beginning, Milstein talks about the "chiliastic impulse" of the Panthers. This is an inaccurate assessment. The BPP used to call itself the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, and self-defense for ghetto blacks was a prime reason for its emphasis on getting guns. Let me state once and for all that such an attitude is understandable. Now of course that doesn't mean that one should agree with this position. The point is, though, that in the area of guns, the Panthers are, if anything, harshly *realistic.* Make of my next point what you will, but I must state that the Panthers' anti-Semitism is a perverse expression of social injustice to blacks. Mr. Milstein's piece is the latest in a long line of Commentary articles which harp on anti-Semitism, but never really come to grips with this insight. . . .

Karl H. Nudelman
South Orange, New Jersey

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Tom Milstein conjures up a picture of capitalists cackling in their boardrooms about how they have dished the social democrats by some judicious encouragement of black extremists.

To which one can only reply: First, not very much tangible aid flowed from the financial Establishment to the Panthers and their ilk. It was nothing in comparison to the publicity provided by the media (because the radicals make

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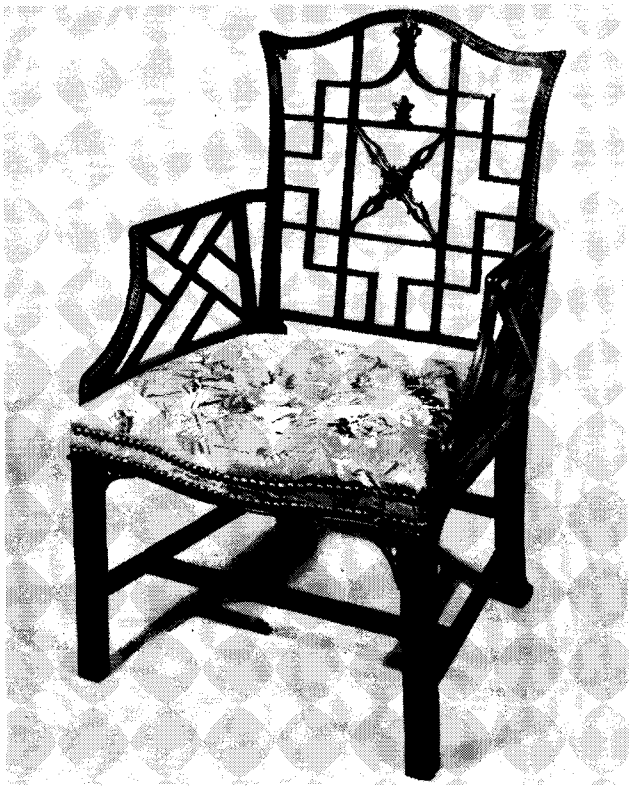

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such good copy) and the endorsement bestowed by the intelligentsia (because they ply the lash so deliciously).

Second, to the small extent that business flirted with black nationalists, it was part of the same trend in which "concerned" citizens of all types—clergy, liberals, moral exhibitionists—rushed to do the same thing. As James Q. Wilson has described it, "Let's go and find out what the poor people want so we can be for it." And, of course, we must be sure to avoid those awful Uncle Toms and make straight for the true, the authentic voices of the ghetto.

It's a puzzle what the patrons of extremism could have been thinking of, but we can be pretty sure that they couldn't have had a thought about splitting the poor from the working class.

CHARLES BRITTON
Manhattan Beach, California

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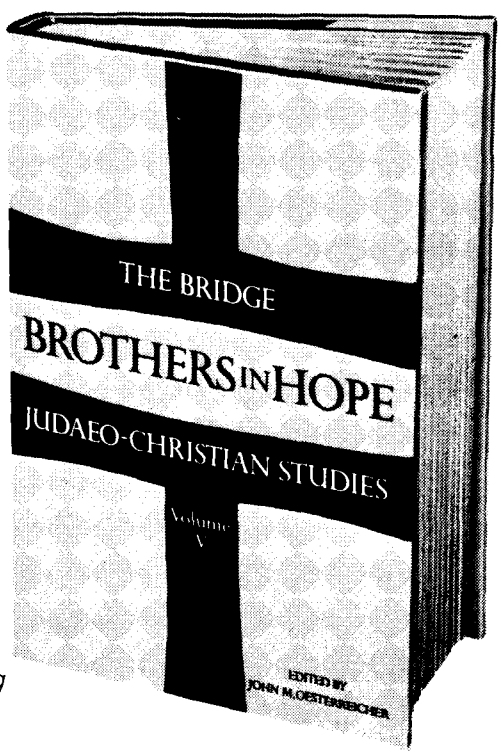

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TOM MILSTEIN writes:

Contrary to what some of my critics seem to think, I described the Panthers as an outgrowth of the black-nationalist movement, not as a part of that movement, and I said that the Black Panther party was allied to various wings of world Communism, not to American business. The reason I quoted so extensively from Panther sources was to demonstrate that it would be impossible to slander the Panthers more cruelly than they slander themselves by their own writings and pronouncements. Mr. Nudelman rather crudely invokes the pathos of the Panthers in order to solicit political support for them. One wonders if fascist anti-Semitism, which was also at least partly "a perverse expression of social injustice," would arouse Mr. Nudelman's refined empathy to the degree that Panther anti-Semitism does.

As to the more serious question my critics raise regarding the relations between business and black nationalism (*not*, to repeat between business and the Black Panther party): what I was concerned to explain was the sudden burgeoning of black nationalism in 1965 when previously it had been confined to a few insignificant fringe groups and to the other-worldly, anti-political Muslims. I argued that the explanation for the spectacular growth of black nationalism lay in the confluence of interests which developed after the civil-rights phase of the Negro movement between the middle-class ideologues of Black Power and the business community. For obvious reasons, it is difficult to quantify the amount contributed by business to this alliance. Much of the largesse was distributed in the form of corporate or private "philanthropy," which for some reason in this country enjoys an almost sacrosanct immunity from any public accountability.

What is really at stake, however, is not the amount of business beneficence but the degree to which business' sudden discovery in the mid-60's of the plight of the black man conditioned the emergence of black nationalism as a mass movement. The connection ought to be plain to anyone with eyes to see. Certainly it is plain enough to the black nationalists themselves, for whom business support has been indispensable: without it, they would have no foundation slush for their organizations; no career op-

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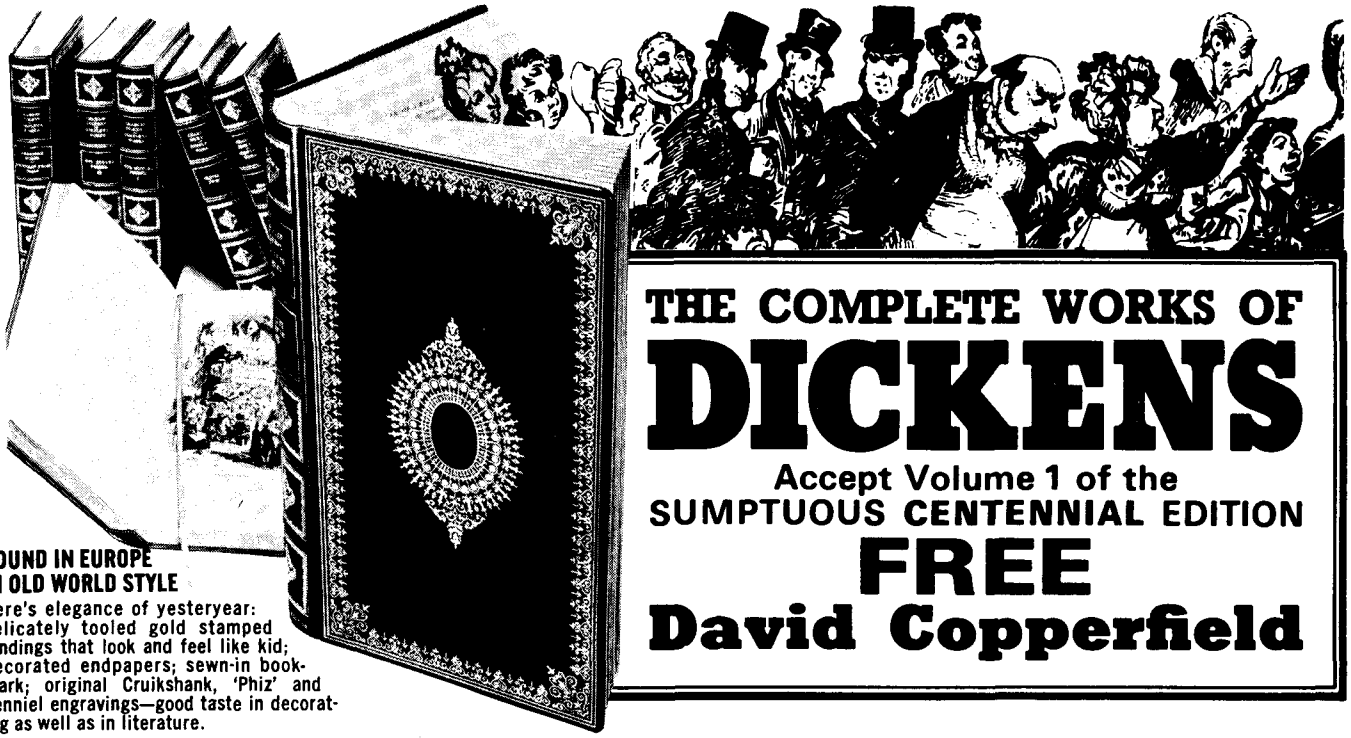

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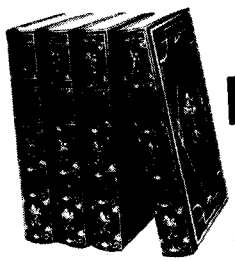

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portunities in the corporations would be open to "militant" young college graduates who selflessly decide to "give the system one last chance," and quite probably there would not even be massive TV and newspaper coverage. (The theory that the mass-media build-up for Black Power was a product of its undiscriminating lust for the sensational fails to explain why men like Bayard Rustin, who regularly deliver themselves of truly sensational attacks on business and the rich, are systematically defined as "dull" by the media, while attacks on everyone else's institutions are regarded by these same people as deliciously outrageous.)

Mr. Britton apparently believes that to suggest an alliance is to impute a conspiracy. Or perhaps he believes that business has no coherent economic and political interest, since to assert that it does is to "conjure up a picture of capitalists cackling in their boardrooms about how they have dished the social democrats." I don't know where or even whether capitalists cackle, but I do know that American business—like any other human social grouping and more than many—has some conception of where its own interests lie as well as some idea of how best to pursue them.

Nevertheless, was it really a conspiracy to dish the social democrats and split the poor from the working class that produced the alliance between business and the nationalists? No, as I tried at some length to make clear in my article, it was not and there is no need to suggest that it was. I myself would accept Dr. Slawson's gentle and tactful way of putting the case. I would add only that the thwarting of the civil-rights movement, the dishing of the social democrats, and the splitting of the poor from the working class were *consequences* of the alliance between business and black nationalism rather than the motives for its formation, but that these consequences were fully in keeping with business' political interests and therefore served to reinforce the alliance once they became visible.

Finally, Mr. Bartley's attribution of Panther-worship to the compulsive alienation of intellectuals as society grants them ever increasing status: alas, if only it were true. A really alienated intelligentsia might some day discover the American labor movement. But that is yet another story.

Radicals: Right, Left & Center

To the Editor of Commentary:

I liked "On Being Deradicalized" [October 1970] very much but I think it's wrong for either Nathan Glazer or Norman Podhoretz to assume that they have moved to the Right or become any less "radical" than they were before. I really am quite dismayed that the romantic neo-fascists (like Charles Reich) have been permitted to expropriate the honorable title of "Left." Because Mr. Glazer realizes that social reform is a long, difficult, complex, and, at best, imperfect affair does not make him either a conservative or right-wing. It simply makes him intelligent.

Andrew M. Greeley
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . The title of Nathan Glazer's article is all wrong. I'm not sure that Mr. Glazer ever was a radical, even a "mild radical." Nor was Mr. Glazer ever considered a radical by today's radicals. Mr. Glazer seems to me an "old" liberal (possibly a bit Left of liberal) who today has become not a conservative, but a reactionary. . . . What Mr. Glazer certainly is, is an intellectual, and as an intellectual he finds himself estranged from the "nihilism" and the violence of today's radicals. Mr. Glazer's world is that of the mind and of logic, and violence boggles that mind and that logic. Furthermore, Mr. Glazer (along with so many liberal academics) gets "nasty" when the radicals begin to attack the university itself, Mr. Glazer's own castle. . . .

If Mr. Glazer were truly a radical, he would have written a different article. Instead of condemning the radicals' tactics, he would have asked what is the *message* in blowing up a university research center dealing with the war effort. He would begin to ask himself how the university as an institution, like other institutions in our technocratic society, is guilty of racism, sexism, and helping the war effort . . . and what he could do to help change these policies. But Mr. Glazer does not do this. Instead he berates the radicals for their "error and confusion."

Secondly, for a sociologist Mr. Glazer makes a great mistake when he talks of the "radicals" and speaks of various factions as if they were one all-encompassing ogre with dynamite in his hand. One cannot generalize about all radicals, or even most radicals in this way. Mr. Glazer, no doubt, means the Weathermen faction, because the other factions of SDS, as well as the New University Conference, condemned the violence of the Weathermen. These last groups do not want to destroy the university; the overwhelming number of radicals do not want to destroy the university. You can't destroy institutions with bombs, anyway, Mr. Glazer. You should know that. What we want to do is to turn the oppressive policies around, emphasize the liberating policies, and institute a transformation of the university—no grades, open admissions, more humane relations between teachers and students, and replacement of the Board of Trustees by a group of teachers, students, administrators, and campus workers. (The Trustees will just raise the money; the real power will be shared by the people in the university.) In short, we want a sharing of power, not a usurpation of power.

Most radicals condemn needless violence, not because of *moral* reasons (that's a "liberal" trip that Mr. Glazer is into), but for *tactical* reasons because violence is turning people off. We need to win people over to a real revolution of social change such as the one I have briefly outlined.

I can understand why Mr. Glazer is so threatened. He stands to lose power himself, as a full professor, if in the future scheme of the university he has to *share* power with the students.

Finally, who is Mr. Glazer addressing? Surely not radicals, Weathermen, New University Conference members, or other radical groups. He is addressing his intellectual colleagues, his liberal friends who comprise most of Commentary's readership. . . .

The truth is that most radicals don't even know who Nathan Glazer is; most students don't know either . . . and most radicals don't read Commentary or bother even to write letters in response to articles written by breast-beating liberals. I may be one of the few. The rest are out planning.

Toward the revolution.

Jack N. Porter
Department of Sociology
Northwestern University

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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Nathan Glazer is a bellwether of the kind of intellectual liberalism which I like to praise whenever possible. When he is to my Left for the moment ("mild radical"), I smile indulgently; when he is to my Right ("mild conservative"), I frown impatiently. Without him I would not know where I am. I don't know why I want him to settle in for the long haul except that he makes me dizzy.

ROBERT MARTINSON
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . The issue is what *kind* of organization will prevail in our society, and in this regard I am disturbed by the political implications of Mr. Glazer's position. As a conservative advocating greater social discipline, he warns against hippies parking their cars in the forests; would he also restrict the political power of the automobile manufacturers who demand highways instead of urban public transportation and who have opposed stringent pollution controls? Would he seek to limit not only tourists to Yosemite but also the mischief of spies and wiretappers and policemen unafraid of punishment for crimes against blacks and hirsute young whites? . . . What would be the logical effect of a foreign policy in which North Korea is described as "infinitely [*sic*] more repressive" than Rhee's South Korea, and the Greece of the colonels is considered free in contrast to Yugoslavia?

The violent disaffection of our gilded youth assuredly runs deeper than politics can rectify; and even the erosion of the bureaucratic style, while necessary, may not be sufficient to restore the sense of meaning and purpose and community. But the heightened regimentation which Mr. Glazer would superimpose on the status quo hardly seems likely to bring about his goal of puncturing the New Left. Such conservatism could in fact extend the havoc of the past decade into an even more intractable *mal de siècle.*

STEPHEN J. WHITFIELD
Newton Highlands, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Nathan Glazer's article on his deradicalization is thoughtful and sincere, unlike much of the bitter whining that COMMENTARY has recently published on this topic.

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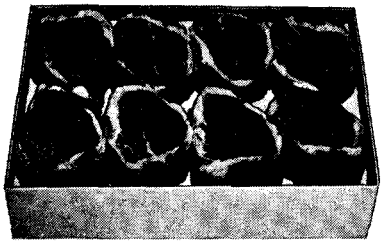

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However, Mr. Glazer neatly evaded several questions that still leave me "under-radicalized."

1) I agree that today's rhetoric is excessive; Johnson and Nixon are not Hitler. However, I do believe that the United States is engaged in an evil, unnecessary war in Indochina. How does Mr. Glazer cope with the problem of complicity with evil (as a taxpayer, academic, etc.)? . . .

2) As a newcomer to the academic scene, I enter my profession recognizing that the university is failing badly in many ways; I too have read Paul Goodman. . . . How can I oppose those who honestly seek change here, including the students?

3) Mr. Glazer assures us that, from his experience in government, Big Brother really does know best. We must pay our debt to our political institutions and organizational structures because many "legitimate interests" are involved. Does Mr. Glazer really view such far-out concepts as racial equality, a decent environment, an end to an evil war, and better education as subject to competing "legitimate" interests? I would question the legitimacy of such interests (usually called lobbies if the interests can afford it). Isn't it possible that these structures are failing us?

4) In one of his paragraphs devoted to the topic, Mr. Glazer seems rather hurt that Negroes aren't grateful to him and his friends for all those wonderful advances in civil rights. If, in 1970, he fails to understand the essential racism of his society and the profound importance of black *pride*, then I'm really at a loss. Or perhaps he is simply incapable of anger at the denial of someone else's rights and needs.

5) Mr. Glazer admits that with regard to the *existing political role* of the university "parts of the critique had force." Well, what has he done about it? Perhaps the solution is to "work within the system," defined as the radical movement, that is, and to try to modify its excesses.

6) We will have greater social controls in the future. The questions are: imposed by whom, and for what purposes? That's what we're fighting about. Controls on my personal reading or upon Standard Oil's profits?

7) Finally, the free world. Of course, there is relatively more freedom here than in Communist countries—unless you are a long-haired radical or a Panther. Read a few Presidential Commission reports on freedom—Scranton, Walker, Kerner. Then again, let's not forget about our free-world comrades who rule South Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Taiwan, South Korea, Greece, Spain, Brazil, etc., etc. Let's compromise and call it the "sort of relatively, inconsistently free world." I'll not call China democratic if you admit that the Chicago Seven were not given a free trial.

As I said earlier, I too have misgivings about the contemporary radical movement; I cannot accept violence and the devaluation of human life by any source for any purpose. However, the tragedy of Mr. Glazer and many contributors to COMMENTARY is that they have forgotten the identity of our real enemy.

S. W. SADAVA
Loyola College
Montreal, Canada

NATHAN GLAZER writes:

Maybe Andrew Greeley and Robert Martinson are right. By New York intellectuals, I'm a conservative; but by conservatives, am I a conservative? (You recall the old joke about the Jewish sea captain; his mother's friends asked, "By me he's a captain, and by you he's a captain, but by captains, is he a captain?")

To Mr. Whitfield: I am not limiting the right of hippies to park in forests nor the admission of tourists to Yosemite. I am merely pointing out that there is a contradiction between massive use of facilities by all, and their maintenance as wilderness facilities. People who want the second must be willing to accept controls in the first; otherwise they are irresponsible children, or selfish. Mr. Whitfield need have no concern: I will be on the side of every fight against overblown urban highways, for public transportation, against brutal policemen. I find most domestic spying and wiretapping repulsive, though I can think of rare cases in which they could be justified.

I was not addressing myself to the foreign-policy implications of the fact that North Korea is infinitely more oppressive than South Korea. I don't believe we have an obligation to overthrow repressive regimes, but I don't see why the acknowledgment of a simple fact should be so worrisome to Mr. Whitfield. I commented on North

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Korea only because some elements in the New Left (e.g., Eldridge Cleaver) on occasion act as if that's the best Communist country of all. Once again, I had to point out the contradiction between demanding freedom and supporting oppression—in different places, of course. I am against the restriction of freedom by authoritarian governments everywhere, including Greece, and I am delighted that there is so little of it these days in Yugoslavia, as compared with the past, but I don't see the relevance of the references. I didn't make them.

To Mr. Porter: No, I don't think many radicals read COMMENTARY, but it's nice that a few do, and I wish more did. They might learn something.

To Mr. Sadava: I don't know how to deal with the problem of complicity in evil, and there has been a vast amount of evil in Vietnam. I can sympathize even with those who feel the evil is so overwhelming and their very remaining alive so implicates them in it that they commit suicide. One does what one can. I did not say "Big Brother really knows best." I don't think our government is "Big Brother," and I do think there are legitimate conflicts of interest involved when one tries concretely to achieve racial equality, a decent environment, and even an end to an evil war. There are also illegitimate interests—racists, slumlords, and armaments makers; and one can add others. But the news to me was that there are *also* legitimate interests, who deserve to be heard by a democratic government, and that's why I spoke of them. Legitimate interests, by the way, also have lobbies: the people in favor of public housing lobby, the NAACP lobbies, the anti-war people lobby—and I wish they were all stronger. I don't recognize the passage where I am supposed to be "hurt that Negroes aren't grateful to [me]"; I don't feel the sentiment, and I don't know what Mr. Sadava is referring to. I have worked for the academic reforms I think valuable—once again, one does what one can. I am against controls on anyone's reading, and for more controls on Standard Oil's profits. Finally, I accept the emendation to the "sort of relatively, inconsistently free world," but it is a little unmanageable. I will *not* admit, on the other hand, that the Chicago Seven were given an unfair trial. I don't know just what the phrase "free trial" is supposed to mean.

The Urban Crisis (Cont'd)

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In my critique ["Is the Urban Crisis Real?," Controversy, November 1970] of Irving Kristol's essay, "Urban Civilization & Its Discontents" [July 1970], I raised the question whether the propensity of intellectuals to conceive of crisis in contemporary American society derives from empirical fact —reality as it is perceived by people and the demonstrable workings of institutions—or from something else. I did not elaborate upon what that something else might be other than to hint gently that it has to do with confusion in the minds of professional observers of society, and some fear also, and that the crisis said to inhere in society might more profitably be traced to the eye of the beholder so that we might better understand the idea of crisis and its remarkably pervasive presence.

That presence now includes the animating spirit of this magazine, for in Mr. Kristol's rejoinder and in Norman Podhoretz's comment on our colloquy ["The Idea of Crisis," November 1970] both men, in different ways but for less dif-

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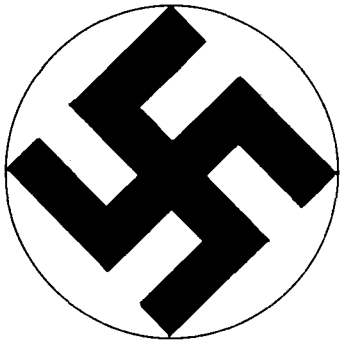

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ferent reasons, insist upon the validity of the perception to describe a large part of reality including the public business that is the affair of politics and political action. Its presence here is the "problem" as I tried to make clear, not its presence outside, and the issue between Mr. Kristol and me is the proper posture of the liberal intellect in the service of a more humane and democratic society in the face of the assault on it of which the "New" Left and the cotton-candy "counter-culture" is compounded. I am one with Messrs. Kristol and Podhoretz in perceiving the anti-democratic odor, the evidence of the totalitarian imagination, in social analysis that proceeds from an assumption of crisis and pretends to instruct a democratic society in courses of action to end it, and I wish no one to think I feel no threat to the continued good health of American democracy posed by such ideas. Nor, in making the radical dichotomy between reality as it is lived and its translation into words and ideas, the disjunction between art and life, did I imply that the ideas and attitudes men carry in their heads and hearts and which inform public debate can or should be separable from the actions of citizens, their elected officials, and scholars in a democracy.

But my questions were directed to the more precise issue of how Mr. Kristol "knows" what ideas and attitudes are in men's heads and hearts, other than his own, so that he can declare in his essay, and more forcefully in his rejoinder, that "our society is sick in spirit" and whether such things as spirits of societies can be divined from what people say in words, especially printed words. An infirmity of literary intellectuals dealing with public affairs and politics is to place excessive weight on words rather than on what people do and it is aggravated in Mr. Kristol's case by much fear and anxiety about those words, which I can readily understand. It must be soul-searing to devote one's life and talents to instruction in the meaning of democracy and how Americans practice it and have to face latter-day saints and Know-Nothings with not the slightest intimation of what freedom means or how easily corrupted are the sentiments uttered in its behalf. But this is no excuse for assuming the vices of mind both Mr. Kristol and Mr. Podhoretz rightly fear and loathe in their adversaries nor to tolerate them just because I know they are good guys with noble purposes in mind.

To state, as Mr. Kristol does, for example, that young people on college campuses, who for the most part if they do so at all, talk a great deal about the evils of authority and discipline and experiment with drugs, sexual freedom, and civil disobedience, "have decided they don't want any part of this civilization" is to engage emotions close to hysteria, emotions more appropriate to the mother and father who having sacrificed, they feel, to send their son to college to become a doctor, discover he has dropped out to live in a hippie commune in California. People who don't want any part of a society emigrate. The last thing they do is submit to the discipline, haphazard and confused as it may be at times, of the proudest institution of that society. This observation will indeed seem only a "partial vision" of this and other matters, an insufficient stick-in-the-mud attitude, as a sensible response to the problem of Johnny the cop-out would be to his parents in their moment of grief. In both cases, dashed expectation, a realization of failure, and a great flailing of self take place, easily giving way to helplessness. Mr. Kristol engages in this kind of flailing, especially of "social science," for not coming to grips with "spiritual turmoil," for not explicating in easy-to-digest, Pablum-like form the " 'causes' of human behavior" and "the *real* drift of events and probable shape of things to come," and for not providing the answers to "the basic questions" of life that men eternally struggle with and which intellectuals dare not presume to answer for them. . . .

Chastising social science for not being a secular religion is a good way to pervert its true value and wither its proper role in a democratic society; crying out that it does not satisfy the itch for answers to such questions is to adopt the worst impulses of those obnoxious young to whom many look as saviors of us all and those, like Charles Reich, who take it upon themselves to provide the answers. This does wonders for the ego, for in the past men usually asked such questions of God. But as Job discovered, even then the answers were ambiguous. In his complaint, Mr. Kristol merely portrays that splendid arrogance

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and exaggerated sense of importance of the role of intellectuals in society that is the vice of an intellectual elite. . . .

This is a posture, a mix of ideas and emotions, that cannot be justified by the importunate belief that the times require intellectual prophets to rise from the muck of empirical fact and grubby concerns with such things as the distribution of wealth. No more can a democrat believe that extraordinary leadership in politics, above and beyond "mere" self-interest politics, is also required. Both impulses feed on that vacuum of faith that is a dispiriting characteristic of the liberal intellect in disarray as it is of the illiberal one: the felt need for certainty. The faith involved is a crucial one: that Americans have the capacity, the inner resources, to direct their destinies as individuals and citizens, and that society has the public resources to preserve its heritage of freedom and opportunity, and therefore we do not need the ministrations of superior beings to tell us what to do.

Behind Mr. Kristol's vision of a new "mass society" as an "ominous reality" in America is the same black emptiness of faith in the common man and the democratic process that lies behind the "counter-culture," and he has good reason to suffer a self-conscious "apocalyptic twinge or two" in formulating his notion of Americans as a herd of sheep being taken in by the debased and vulgar ideas of the latest millenarian salvationists and others. The central fear that animates his essay and rejoinder is that "we" Americans, or at least enough of us to count a great deal, will be, or are being, taken in by the "counter-culture" and its pretensions, that "contagious" disease to which "more and more" of us are succumbing, his version of what often is called "technology" or the "Establishment" or the power elite. But does not this smack of the same exaggeration his version of campus reality does? Is it "us" who are likely to become sick? Or is it the liberal intellect, unable to cope effectively with a miasma of ignorance, troubled at its evident lack of power and influence and therefore subject to terrifying doubts of its own capacity to survive?

There is good reason for the liberal intellect to be troubled and the nation is heading for troubles, but they are a matter of the de-

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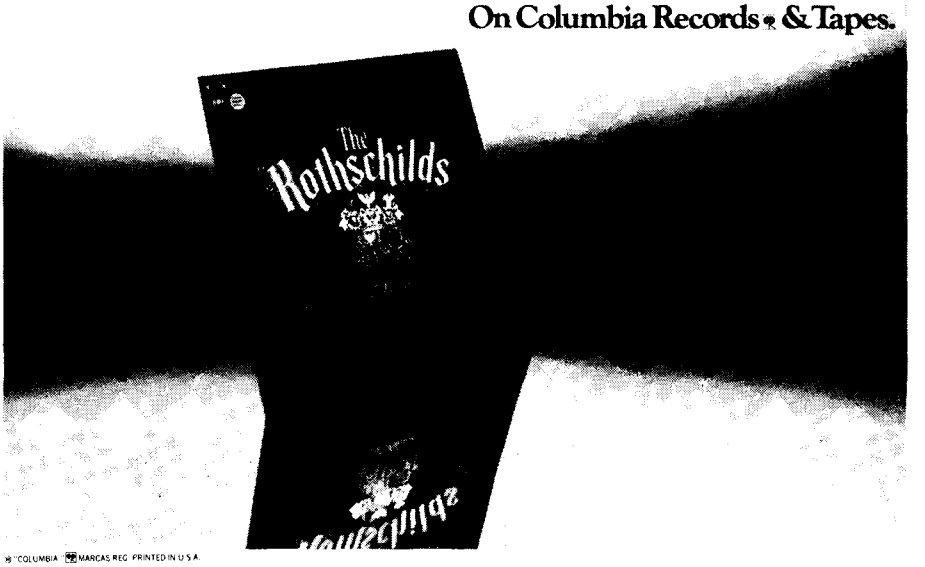

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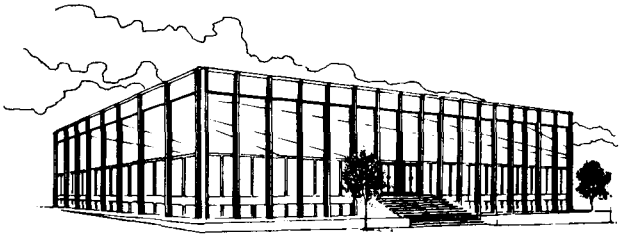

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cline of authority and effective wielding of public power on behalf of an enlarged sense of the public interest and not, as Mr. Kristol believes, a matter of the decline of morals and democratic civic virtues. There is a general disengagement from the conflicts involved and sacrifices required in the responsible use of public power in favor of quietism and withdrawal, a turning off and tuning out by the great middle classes which remade a continent, a society, and their own lives in the past generation and want to rest—from mobilizing resources to manage American interests abroad, from undertaking grand projects at home, and from the private voluntary association that humanizes politics and institutional activity.

Beneath the surface of events and that jittery politicization of concern and socialization of aesthetic values that characterize "public" discourse are the beginnings of a new normalcy, a withdrawal into myriad private worlds in search of interior satisfactions. It is shriveling the body politic. We shall see some ugly politics of narrow self-interest, a new isolationism, and a shrinkage of the public economic sector and a great deal else that will remind us of the 1920's. But these are troubles that human intelligence, money, and power can manage, although they may not be well-managed and people will suffer; intellectuals involved in public affairs can help solve them by application of that tough-minded skepticism and empirical pragmatism that Mr. Kristol was at pains to disavow. He disavowed much more, however, in preaching moral revival for the woe of humans as a society, and this is the greatest vice. For in making the achievement of individual happiness dependent upon the moral condition of everyone, or "society" and its works and institutions, Irving Kristol would betray the spirit and resources of the inner man which owe no debt to society and upon which society can lay no claim; he thereby would extinguish that essential hope that through our own efforts tomorrow may be better than today, for ourselves and for society.

JEROME ZUKOSKY
New York City

IRVING KRISTOL writes:

Usually, and fortunately, the kind of disagreement that has emerged between Mr. Zukosky and myself tends to remain "academic." In settled times, the modes of civility in daily life are not controversial issues—though individuals may, at their leisure, speculatively question them. But these are not settled times we live in; such vague, "cultural" issues become stubbornly intrusive; and so Mr. Zukosky and I, whose specifically political opinions are not far apart, are nevertheless at odds. I see an evident decline in American decency, and I am therefore worried about the future of this country. Mr. Zukosky, seeing the democratic machinery still functioning, and full of his "faith in the common man," is offended by my anxieties. He thinks I am being hysterical; I think he is being unperceptive. He thinks I magnify the importance of ephemeral things (e.g., the drug culture, student radicalism, etc.); I think he fails to take seriously important things (e.g., the drug culture, student radicalism, etc.). He thinks I pay too much attention to what some people say and write; I think he is being misled by statistical aggregates.

One could go on, but this really isn't the occasion. Our debate could fill a book, much less a magazine. . . . So I will conclude simply by trying to clarify one issue about which Mr. Zukosky seems confused. I certainly never meant to chastise social science for failing to comprehend a condition of spiritual turmoil. My point was that social science *cannot* do this—and that social scientists therefore are inclined to doubt the existence, or to minimize the significance, of spiritual turmoil. Mr. Zukosky, a very capable social scientist, is a case in point.

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Taking Issue

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Not only has Norman Podhoretz become "mildly conservative" ["Laws, Kings, and Cures," October 1970] but, like the conservatives, largely negative; and like William Buckley, who might as well be on COMMENTARY's staff now, so snide—here I am thinking of the ladies Decter and Rabinowitz. Mr. Podhoretz seems to be obsessed with those to the Left of him, which comes to mean almost anyone not in the Establishment. I understand the fears of a right-wing reaction. Still . . . isn't there a need for continuing analyses of the war, racism, and the institutionalized corruption of business, politics, the military, and the rest, not to speak of the ecological disaster we seem incapable of preventing? . . .

ISADORE TRASCHEN
Troy, New York

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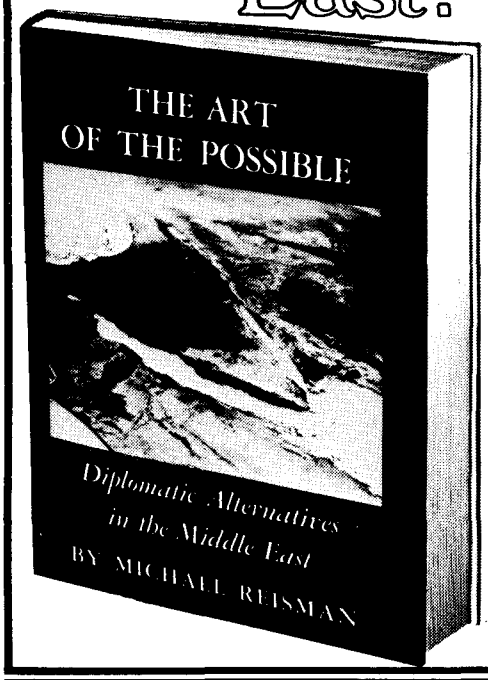

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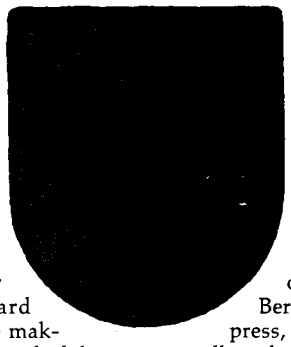

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To the Editor of Commentary:

As I read "The Idea of Crisis" [Issues, November 1970], I was grateful for the clarity and forcefulness of Norman Podhoretz's observations. It reminded me of the time Ed Murrow stood before the CBS TV camera to reveal the true nature of McCarthyism; this was at the height of the Wisconsin Senator's diabolical influence and served as a turning point in that demagogue's career. Mr. Podhoretz may well have done the same service for those of us who have felt crushed between the extremes of the Right and the Left in more recent years.

George Field
Executive Director Emeritus
Freedom House
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

Norman Podhoretz may wish to call the period through which we are living whatever he likes. Even normal, if he enjoys it. A "crisis" exists whenever a system is off-balance. Whether we have indeed, slipped into a period where the stabilizers of American society have broken down and the whole society . . . is out of control is a judgment we all have to make. But to stick a label on those of us who think that things have somehow gone wrong and call us "enemies of democracy" is intellectually unworthy of someone who has the opportunity to address his fellow intellectuals every month. To climb up the flagpole and sing the "Star-Spangled Banner" isn't even good rhetoric. It's simply a sign that Podhoretz has stopped thinking.

John Friedmann
Los Angeles, California

To the Editor of Commentary:

Norman Podhoretz's column objecting to anyone who might "harp on the idea of crisis" reminds me of the well-known ostrich.

Sydney L. Berger
Evansville, Indiana

Norman Podhoretz writes:

What I was suggesting in "The Idea of Crisis" was that a political purpose is itself being served by the notion—or, if Mr. Friedmann prefers, the judgment—that American society has "broken down" or is "out of control." George F. Kennan recently made much the same point as I was trying to make but

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in terms perhaps more lucid when he said that the "exaggeration of admittedly existing evils has regularly formed the initial ideological basis for fanatical political movements, including the totalitarian ones." Now it should be obvious to anyone who has not "stopped thinking" that the alternatives to exaggerating (or "harping on") a social evil are neither to act the ostrich by denying the existence of real social and political problems (as Mr. Berger imagines) nor to act the mindless chauvinist (as Mr. Friedmann charges) nor (as Mr. Traschen in a slightly different context alleges) to become merely "negative." Those of us who value the system of pluralistic democracy which maintains an imperfect but nevertheless vibrantly real existence in America, who have some appreciation of its delicacy and fragility, and who feel some measure of intellectual humility before what is after all one of the rarest collective achievements of the civilized political spirit—those of us who feel all this will recognize as an enemy of democracy any critic of American society who is demonstrably, even if inadvertently, animated by the desire to discredit rather than the wish to reform the institutions which are the visible embodiments of that spirit. We ourselves will, and do, bend every effort to arrive at a true diagnosis of the real problems the American polity faces, so that we may contribute what we can to such resolution of them as is humanly possible.

But we recognize that the main obstacles to the elaboration of this diagnosis are the misconceptions which have been spread so effectively in recent years by the New Left, the counter-culture, and their assorted apologists and sycophants in the academy, the mass media, and periodicals like the *New York Review of Books*. If I and some other contributors to COMMENTARY seem "obsessed with those to the Left" of us, it is because *that* is the direction from which the overwhelming majority of those misconceptions are presently coming. The "continuing analyses" Mr. Traschen is asking for cannot be made responsibly or truthfully unless these barriers to the proper understanding of our corporate situation are swept away by vigorous and principled argument.

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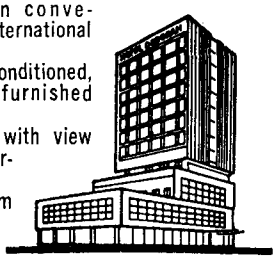

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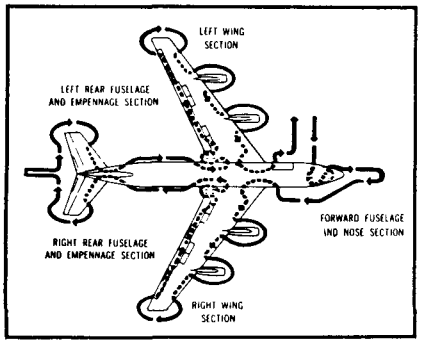
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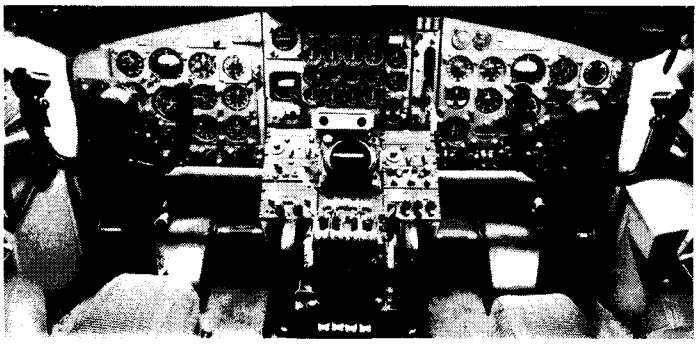

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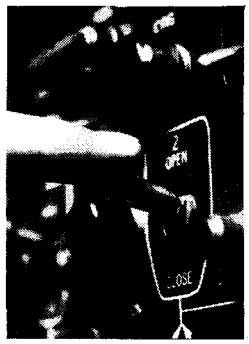

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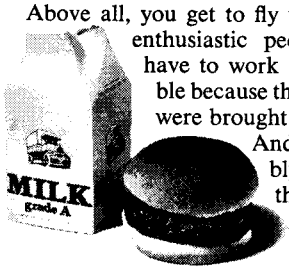

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Judging the Chicago Trial

Alexander M. Bickel

JULIUS HOFFMAN, Thomas Foran, William Kunstler, Tom Hayden, David Dellinger, Rennie Davis, Bobby Seale, Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin—these are, like Spiro Agnew, household names we owe to the benighted summer of 1968, though we have acquired them gradually since. We could do without them, but we can't. The Hoffmans, Foran and the rest, with John Froines, Lee Weiner, Richard G. Schultz (like Foran, a federal prosecutor), Leonard Weinglass (like Kunstler, a defense lawyer), plus a jury were the cast, of course, of the Chicago convention-riots trial of 1969-70.

The defendants, or some of them, may well consider that on the whole they profited from the trial. They achieved, they may believe, a political objective. "The scene of a political trial," Tom Hayden has written, "should extend into the final courtroom of public opinion." Charges such as those lodged against the Chicago defendants "should be tried in the media. . . . In this way we take the legal camouflage off repression and expose it for what it is. We create a sympathetic climate of opinion that the government must either placate or alienate. We exercise political influence on the higher courts. If we are acquitted by a jury of the people, then the government becomes the criminal, even if we are in jail."* J. Anthony Lukas, who covered the trial for the New York *Times*, reports:

> But here [in contrast to the earlier Spock trial] the defendants did more than merely accept the government's challenge to a political trial. They welcomed it. There wasn't much going on in the radical movement, anyway. The SDS was hopelessly splintered and ineffective. Winter was coming on and there wouldn't be any campus uprisings for a while. So the defendants determined to make the trial the central radical event of the year. They saw it as an opportunity to radicalize people around the issues of the courts and the law.†

Who knows how many people were indeed radicalized by the trial, as by the events in Chicago in the summer of 1968. But if many were radicalized to the Left, others were radicalized to the Right. Like all politicians, Hayden tends to overestimate and overdramatize his potential constituency. He can say, for example, that Richard Nixon "entered office as an illegitimate President, without a shred of authorization from the blacks and the young." Mr. Nixon did get very little of the black vote, but it is notorious that both the President and George Wallace got plenty of votes from young people—the young who do not follow Hayden, and never would.** Yet some part of Hayden's objective was undoubtedly attained. Many people have come to look upon the Chicago trial as an instance of repression, a gross indecency committed by their government. Two of the defendants were altogether acquitted, all were found not guilty of the conspiracy charge, and the whole case may be won in the end. The convictions that were handed down may well be reversed on appeal, and the contempt sentences imposed on the defendants and their lawyers vacated. But an aftertaste will linger; in some indeterminate number of people the vague notion that authority in America is somehow illegitimate will have been newly planted.

Now, the argument can be made that the Chicago trial was an exercise of illegitimate authority because it was lawless by the standards of the legal order professedly applicable to it. Or the trial can be condemned on the ground that it exemplified a legal order which is itself iniquitous, illegitimate, and incapable of generating the proper criteria of judgment. Or, to be sure, the trial can be condemned on both grounds. Even so, the question whether the trial was lawless and the question whether the American legal order as a whole is unjust and not worthy of respect are separate questions.

Tom Hayden, in his book on the trial, treats them as separate:

> The main point is that the Chicago conflict

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* *Trial*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 168 pp., $4.95.

† *The Barnyard Epithet and Other Obscenities*, Harper & Row, 107 pp., $4.95.

** The question arises whether publishers edit books by radicals. Would not Holt, Rinehart & Winston have queried a statement such as this in anyone else's manuscript, asked that it be justified, and obtained at the very least a clarification or qualification of it?

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could not be simplified, as it was in the press, to one of free speech versus respect for the law. By defining the question as one of free speech, many of our supporters were making a major liberal mistake. They opened themselves up to a common-sense conservative criticism: free speech is all right, but not obscene epithets shouted at police. Liberal sympathizers were being forced, in effect, to defend our right to shout "Fire!" in a crowded theater. In reality, the government, not the radical left, has become a "clear and present danger" to our common security. In this situation radical action has to be defended, not on the basis of civil liberties, but on the basis of the principles embodied in the Declaration of Independence.

In a more pretentious and less candid book, Jason Epstein* fudges what Hayden makes clear. Epstein means to reach a different audience, and he can't afford Hayden's uprightness. He must make the "major liberal mistake," or else the liberals will see through his major revolutionary mistakes.

Epstein never appears in his proper person, never speaks unambiguously in his own voice. He was there, out in the open in his proper person, in Chicago during the trial. It was Epstein, Anthony Lukas reports, who arranged to startle Judge Hoffman with the presence of his namesake Abbie at lunch one day. Judge Hoffman was in the habit of taking his lunch at the Standard Club, which is said to be a Jewish club, and evidently the plushest in Chicago. Not unnaturally, Epstein—no revolutionary, but a vice president of Random House, which published his book—had access to the Standard. He invited Norman Mailer, Jules Feiffer, and Lukas to lunch there with him. But Mailer wanted to go eat with Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, and Kunstler. "Bring them along," Lukas reports Epstein as saying, "with an impish grin." Along they came, and were treated to the spectacle of Judge Hoffman fleeing hastily at sight of them to a table behind a pillar. But in the book neither the impish nor the partisan Epstein is overtly present. He merely reports what the defendants and others thought or said or did, interrupting himself only, every so often, to survey an aspect of legal and political history, or to explicate a point of law. He is nothing but the impartial, dispassionate observer and savant.

The savant's encyclopedic knowledge comes —though often not quite straight—out of an encyclopedia, and the impartial observer is given to argument by insinuation and sleight of pen. Epstein writes, for example, that Chief Judge Campbell's conduct in handling the grand jury that indicted the defendants was reprehensible, "especially since, as was later to become known, Judge Campbell's plan was that he himself would preside at the trial. . . ." But it never later becomes known to us. And how could it? And how could Judge Campbell have hoped to carry out his plan under a system which assigns judges to trial automatically? The unfounded insinuation is simply that Judge Campbell planned to cheat. Again, in a convoluted paragraph, Epstein suggests that perhaps Judge Campbell engineered the indictment because he was looking for "further judicial or political advancement," which is asinine as well as gratuitous, since the judge was just about sixty-five, and a Democrat to boot. Or: Epstein believes that the government listened in on telephone calls Bobby Seale was allowed to make from jail. A few pages after he has told us this, Epstein reports a colloquy between Judge Hoffman and Kunstler about Seale's desire to represent himself. "I am not fooled by all this business," the judge says, and Epstein adds: "leaning across his bench, as if perhaps he too may have become aware of Seale's intercepted conversations from jail." That is some very eloquent leaning across a bench! Moreover, the phrase "he too" is notable. The reference is to assistant prosecutor Schultz, who we learned a few pages back "may" have known about the intercepted conversation at this time because there is evidence that he knew of some such conversations, and made them known to the court, *five months after the trial was over.* Or: Why did the head of the intelligence division of the Chicago police department warn his superiors in August 1968 that serious disturbances might develop around the convention? Well, he "may have" relied on reports of a newspaperman who had spoken in the same sense to an assistant of the mayor, who "presumably" passed the information on. But "probably" he got his notions from the FBI, since—would you believe it!—an FBI agent actually visited Chicago and talked to the police about the Panthers the preceding April. In Epstein's account Judge Hoffman seldom disagrees with contentions made before him by the defense; he ignores them. A new dictionary entry is needed for ignore: to reject, disagree (*as I ignore you*); in *law*, to overrule, deny (a *motion*), decide, make a ruling; [Archaic] disregard deliberately, pay no attention. Defense lawyers, on the other hand, hardly ever argue or contend; they explain.

I WILL TRY to deal presently with some of the legal issues that Epstein raises. But they are intertwined with assertions of the immorality and illegitimacy of the society and its legal order, and these assertions need to be looked at first. They raise a prior question and a more resounding one, capable after all of quite overwhelming any legal issue, let alone hopelessly confusing it. Our attention is directed to the illegitimacy of the legal and social order very near the beginning of Epstein's book in a curious passage about the Weathermen, who staged a *Kristallnacht* in Chicago shortly after the trial had started, having previously—although there is no certain

* *The Great Conspiracy Trial*, Random House, 433 pp., $7.95.

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proof of this—dynamited the statue of a policeman in Haymarket Square (a deed since repeated). The Weathermen, says Epstein, unlike certain more moderate, or perhaps more prudent, or perhaps again more rational, radicals, "were determined not to argue with a dying culture, but, no matter how feeble their present means, to try to kill it." Death was much on their minds. "Dig it," Epstein quotes Bernadine Dohrn,* one of the Weathermen leaders, speaking about the Los Angeles murders of which Charles Manson and others stand accused: "First they killed those pigs . . . then [the killers] ate dinner in the same room with them; then they even shoved a fork into a victim's stomach. Wild!" The reader may be satisfied that he can appreciate this remark unaided, and be puzzled only at why he is solemnly presented with it at the opening of a book about the Chicago trial. But Epstein goes to great lengths to help us understand what Bernadine Dohrn had in mind. She intended no more, it may be, Epstein writes, than to emphasize the hypocrisy of a society which deplores the Los Angeles murders "while collectively it murders Vietnamese and brutalizes its own poor"—from which the conclusion would be drawn that the victims in Los Angeles, "being white Americans, got no more than they deserved, in Miss Dhorn's view." This thought is left pending. Epstein is far from dismissing it as implausible, let alone unworthy. But one gets the feeling from what follows that he regards it as a bit trivial. For Miss Dohrn's "celebration of murder," he goes on to tell us, reflects also another—plainly we are to think more profound—concern of the Weathermen: "that their instinctual sources of aggression have been illegitimately taxed by a culture that has perverted and collectivized these energies and converted them to purposes of mass killing, leaving its individual members psychologically feeble and thus unable to confront their brutal culture with sufficient force." Bernadine Dohrn echoes, says Epstein, the passion with which such writers as de Sade and D. H. Lawrence attacked sexual repression. "Like these enthusiasts for sexual self-determination, Miss Dhorn and her followers may feel that society has stolen from its members an important part of their instinctual capital, and that to regain these resources is essential not only to their personal survival, but to the survival of the species."

To recapitulate and try to translate, then, American society is so immeasurably culpable that random murders of any of its white members can be perceived as just. What is more, part of the society's culpability is that by engaging in war and in other unnamed acts of collective "brutalization," it has denuded its members of the capacity to commit individual murders, personal crimes. This capacity needs to be recaptured. It is necessary now to restore the autonomy of the individual's instinct to kill.

If this is where we have gone wrong—if, to put it plainly, the Los Angeles murders are admirable and the laws that forbid them immoral and unjust—then it cannot be that Epstein is really very interested in determining whether the Chicago trial was conducted in violation of or in obedience to the laws of such a society. But, of course, Epstein is merely reporting. It is not Jason Epstein there on these pages of his book. It is Bernadine Dohrn. It is not even the defendants in the Chicago trial, who joined with the Weathermen in their condemnation of the society, but who parted company with them when it came to love of murder. Yet the parting of company was only tactical, Epstein tells us. "What the Weathermen represented for the defendants was a tactical and ideological dilemma, not unlike what the defendants themselves presented to the liberal generation of which they were in turn the frustrated and bitter heirs." And—though the moral problem is of a different order of magnitude—not unlike what Joe McCarthy presented to Robert A. Taft and other respectable Republicans who were heard to say that they agreed with McCarthy's objectives, were unhappy about his tactics, but would observe them in silence so long as he was good for the Republican party. Nor unlike, indeed morally quite like, what the Stalinists thought Hitler should represent for Western popular fronts in 1939—a matter, said Molotov, of taste.†

THE WEATHERMEN and the Chicago defendants were at one, and believed themselves at one with great masses of young people, Epstein reports, in their allegiance to certain ideals, "the true and ancient ideals of the republic," and in their conviction that these ideals "had been corrupted by . . . usurping politicians," who exercised "illegitimate control of the nation's destiny," and were cruelly and greedily imposing "their debased civilization upon the people of the world." No more than the Weathermen were the Chicago defendants opposed merely to the war in Southeast Asia, or even merely to the "brutality of domestic life." These were after all only symptoms. The cause of all American evils was "the native culture itself, a profound and probably in-

* The spelling is uncertain. Epstein gives it as Dhorn, but Dohrn is more commonly used by others.

† Hayden addressed the Weathermen before they went on their rampage, praising their militancy, and afterward he and the other Chicago defendants issued a statement which, far from condemning the violence, said of it: "America reaps what she sows." But Hayden is repelled by the Weathermen's glorification of Manson, whom he cheerfully names in his book, and calls "a cool, totally alienated killer," even though no jury had convicted Manson of the Los Angeles (or any other) murders at the time Hayden wrote. It is perhaps fair enough that Presidents of the United States should be forbidden such slips of the tongue, but that hardly anybody, and certainly not his publisher, takes it amiss when a Tom Hayden ignores—yes, ignores—the presumption of innocence in print.

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curable disease that had destroyed the hopes and dignity of the people." The political system and the cultural processes that bred it had lost their "claim on the faith of the people," and had to be extirpated. The defendants "hated," Epstein tells us, the political economy, and above all the moral system which they viewed as an expression of the Puritan tendency in Christianity; and they were intent on purging themselves and the country of their "corrupt inheritance," and incidentally, of course, also of "their despised rulers."

SUCH IS THE statement of this highly charged emotional position. Of evidence or argument to support it there is next to none. It is common knowledge, one gets the impression, that the civilization is debased and that life in the United States is brutal. There is a fleeting reference to the nation's failure "at last" to undertake the "programs of domestic reform that had been promised by John Kennedy in 1960," which is a misrepresentation, since most of the promises made by John Kennedy were redeemed by his successor. There is a reference also to the killing by Chicago police last December of two Black Panthers, which is probably well taken, as that was most likely an outrage. But we are then assumed to know—which is rather another matter—that the killings in Chicago in December were no isolated incident, but part of a "general plan," conceived and executed by the federal government, together with local police, "to destroy the Panther party" by illegally repressive and presumably also murderous means. For has not the Vice President called the Panthers an "irresponsible, anarchistic group of criminals," has not the Justice Department sent a lawyer around to assist local authorities to prepare indictments, have not Panthers been indicted in New York for a conspiracy to bomb department stores, were not Panthers, including Bobby Seale, indicted in New Haven for the murder of Alex Rackley, and have there not been raids in other cities, even if no killings?

But Vice President Agnew has hurled his maledictions in only slightly less incendiary language at others as well, and his speeches, while deeply regrettable—as are the considerably more incendiary speeches of the Panthers themselves—fall short of illegally repressive, let alone murderous, official action. A trial in New York will ultimately give us clearer indication than we can now have whether or not a conspiracy to bomb department stores did exist there. And Alex Rackley was murdered by Panthers, as a trial in New Haven has demonstrated—a trial fairly conducted to everyone's satisfaction including that of the defendants, despite the celebrated skeptical prejudgment of the President of Yale. Whether the murder was committed on the orders of Bobby Seale remains to be proved, or not proved, at yet another trial in New Haven. There is no basis in known facts for the implication that raids on Panther headquarters other than the fatal one in Chicago were concerted and were all equally unlawful and outrageous. Panther establishments are virtual arsenals, Panther rhetoric is consistently violent, and Panther activities, as at least the New Haven trial showed, can sometimes be of legitimate interest to law-enforcement agencies. If Panther headquarters get raided more often than Christian Science Reading Rooms, the explanation is not necessarily to be found in a conspiracy to repress the party and murder its members.

The assumption that murderous repression is all about us is buttressed by reminders, sometimes quite lengthy, of such earlier events as the Haymarket riot of 1886 in Chicago and the resultant trial, Star Chamber proceedings in 17th-century England, the Rosenberg atom-spy case of the early 1950's, the Reichstag fire and the trial of Dimitrov in Hitler Germany in 1933, and the suppression in the Plymouth plantation of the sect of Merry Mount Maypole dancers. Only witch burning and the Inquisition are missing. These events are themselves not closely analyzed, and their relevance to the present state of American society is left essentially to the imagination of the reader. They are simply evoked as guilt-inducing devices —guilt by historical association. Always insinuating from somewhere behind the bright light and never confronting us directly, Epstein seeks to wrest a confession from us by an extension of the technique Koestler reconstructed in *Darkness at Noon*. Epstein has occasion—what, in 433 pages, does he not take in vain?—to indicate that he doesn't think much of Lincoln's plea in his First Inaugural that men allow the "mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every heart and hearth-stone on this broad land . . . [to] swell the chorus of the Union," and so preserve it. But he has no hesitation in swelling a chorus of guilt and of hate of self and of others by touching the mystic chords of distorted and inapposite memory.

Conspiratorial assumptions* and fake historical analogies are necessary because the real ills of

* Epstein's conspiratorial assumptions, calculated to engage the credulity of his particular audience, are mild as compared with the rather hairier brand of Hayden's. (But Hayden peddles no encyclopedic learning, and is, as noted, altogether cleaner in outlook and address.)

Hayden blandly asks us to assume that the murder of Robert Kennedy underscored "the fact that violence was in store for anyone—even those safely within the system—who wanted at least a modification of American policies." Hayden also puts forth for serious consideration Eldridge Cleaver's argument, made in an introduction to Jerry Rubin's book, *Do It*, that what happened in Chicago in August 1968 was "that a right-wing conspiracy to elect Nixon set up the confrontation to discredit the Democrats and stampede a frightened public toward more conservative electoral choices." He similarly presents Dick Gregory's "view," which Gregory offered as a defense witness at the Chicago trial, that "the CIA was trying to 'overthrow the country,' was implicated in the deaths of Dr. King and both

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American society are a powerful argument for action and perhaps even for structural reform, but they are not, Epstein must after all sense, a sufficient argument for revolution. And the argument is for revolution, not reform.

Ills there are. There is poverty, and misery, and injustice. There has also been, in the past decade, let alone in the twenty-five years since the end of World War II, progress which has given us an unprecedented degree of material well-being, quite probably an unprecedented measure of economic equity, an unprecedentedly open, mobile, and free society, and very substantial advances in social justice. One may be proud as well of a society which has put man on the moon. But there is no point in a recital of achievements. All that can be proved is that we are entitled to high hopes. Yet revolutions are born of hope, not of despair, even though they need the rhetoric of despair to justify the dirty work by which they are made. The question about a revolution, therefore, is not what has it despaired of, but what are its hopes?

FOR THE MOMENT, our revolutionists offer us hatred. They despise and dehumanize the persons, and they contemn the concerns, the aspirations, the daily lives of the vast majority of their countrymen.* They offer for the future, so far as Epstein or Hayden or anyone else has been able to make clear, the Maypole dance and, in considerable tension if not contradiction, a vision of "liberated" masses tramping the earth shoulder to shoulder and abjuring profit, competition, personal achievement, and any form of gratification that isn't instantly and equally available to all others as well. "Disobey your parents," a pamphlet issued by the Yippies, Abbie Hoffman's and Jerry Rubin's group, urges the young. Rubin himself has been heard to advise them to go home and kill their parents. "Burn your money," the pamphlet continues as quoted by Epstein. "You know life is a dream and all our institutions are man-made illusions, effective only because you take the dream for reality. Break down the family, church, nation, city, economy, turn life into an art form and theater of the soul. What is needed is a generation of people who are freaky, crazy, irrational, sexy, angry, irreligious, childish, and mad . . . who lure the youth with music, pot, and acid . . . who redefine the normal. . . . Burn your houses down and you will be free." Hayden has remarked that "beautiful sentiments are expressed in that statement."

Suppose millions upon millions of us cannot be persuaded that we would be happier if we freed ourselves of the achievement ethic, or happier traipsing over a green hill than swilling beer in front of the TV, does that entitle a band of people who are seized of a higher vision to coerce us into conforming to it? Never mind that the vision is anti-intellectual, that mind and art are to be leveled, that the spirit will suffocate as Rubin and Hoffman free it to redefine the normal. How will we maintain material conditions, let alone improve them, if we all quit the miserable, debased production of goods which now obsesses us? Who will mind the store while we dance in the streets?† These are silly questions, and

Kennedys, and was planning the assassination of black leaders, including himself, in Chicago as a pretext for using the pre-positioned U.S. troops against the ghetto." Hayden himself perceives some holes in what he is pleased to call Cleaver's "analysis," and finds it "not necessary" to accept the entirety of Gregory's "view." His own, if you please, analysis is this: "Certainly Dr. King and perhaps both Kennedys were killed by right-wing elements with official connections. A real investigation into the killings would yield explosive results. But regardless of who those specific assassins turn out to be, it is the general attitude of the American Right that it is necessary to use violence and repression to destroy not only hard-core radicalism but the liberalism that fosters it as well. The assassination of popular leaders is only one tactic among many for achieving this result."

* Epstein himself does not call people pigs, and some of his expressions of contempt for the white middle class seem to amount to no more than social snobbery—cruel and coarse, to be sure, as only a self-righteous humanitarian, secure in the knowledge that he loves his fellow man, would permit himself to be. There are comments on glossy and peroxided pompadours, for example, on Foran's wife's "golden pyramid" of hair, and on Schultz's wife's "concave features." But when Epstein gets to Judge Julius Hoffman, he reaches a level of viciousness beyond mere social snobbery. The judge's appearance, speech, and manner are relentlessly ridiculed (his size—quite small—evidently gave particular offense), as is everything else about him, not excluding the fact that—we are told—he married a well-to-do divorcee with two children, whom he refers to as his, though he has none of his own.

† As soon as anything needs to be accomplished that is more complicated than preparing a dish of spaghetti, distributing marijuana, or perhaps letting some random bombings occur, it becomes apparent readily enough that division of labor is essential, that indeed labor, which does not always coincide with self-fulfillment, is essential. The defense in Chicago, Anthony Lukas reports, could call on plenty of volunteers for the staff work it naturally needed. But these volunteers soon discovered that what was wanted of them was sheer unadorned labor: typing, mimeographing, running errands. The defendants themselves had other things to do, the important, the fulfilling things. And they couldn't possibly be bothered to decide what to do each day by consulting the entire staff and taking a vote. Was she working for Rennie Davis, asked a young lady dissatisfied with the defendants' treatment of her and the rest of the staff? Certainly not. She was working for the Movement, and if she thought that what Davis was doing was wrong, "Why is it that he should have someone there to tell me to shut my mouth and type my letters?" Tom Hayden himself tells the same story, with much bafflement and regret. "Like any other business," he writes, "the Conspiracy organization pigeon-holed people into roles." The leaders never consulted staff members about basic trial strategy, "and their [the staff members'] growth as whole people was hardly allowed in the situation." Everyone was under pressure. "None of us had ever been required to appear on time every morning for six months anywhere. . . . The trial necessitated discipline. . . . This crowded out time for democratic decision-making or the nonexploitative relationships we are supposed to be building. . . ."

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it puts one in a ridiculous light to ask them. For the answers are obvious. Those of us who insist on striving and on swilling beer don't really know what we want, and the revolution, though perhaps initially forced on us, will show us that we didn't know what we wanted, and will enable us freely to want what we should. And we won't be dancing in the streets all the time by any means. We will be fulfilling ourselves both at work and at play, and those of us who play too much will be told gently, persuasively, but in the end firmly by our new leaders (positioned not above us, but side-by-side with us) that for our own and the common good we ought to work more and play less. And we will do it gladly, for the society will be ours, not the CIA's, as it is now. When we work, we will all be doing the work that fulfills us, not some task to which we have been arbitrarily assigned, and if we fall into some individual error about what work really does fulfill us, we will be shown our mistake, we will see it, and proceed to do what we ought to do.

It all rings true. A system can surely be built that will seem to the group in charge to meet the description given by a young lady named Linda Morse as a defense witness at the Chicago trial: a system "that cares about people living adult lives that are responsible, fulfilled adult lives, not just drudgery, day after day going to a job; one that gives people a chance to express themselves artistically and politically and religiously and philosophically." It is only that there is a name well-known to the human race for the means that have to be employed to create such a system and keep it satisfactory in the eyes of its creators and leaders. That name is tyranny. We are all and always in some measure coerced by our needs, by the needs of others, by our individual capacities and ineptitudes, by our culture, and by institutions and other man-made complexities of life. Our freedom, as Holmes said of judges, may be more molecular than molar, and it is more political than personal. But we would all recognize tyranny when we saw it.

II

For defendants committed to such a revolution, interest in the legality of the Chicago trial was spurious, as the interest of their apologists and outriders is specious. But the legal order the defendants despise persists and may survive them. And from the point of view of those who give it their allegiance, the question of the legality of the trial is of the greatest moment.

Early on, we are told by Epstein that the defendants viewed the trial as political, and are led to infer that political trials are by definition without the law. Innumerable other people, including Anthony Lukas for one example, use this term loosely. If all that is meant by a political trial is one that has political consequences, or one that is occasioned by a crime which in turn had a political aspect, then the term, epithet that it is, does not say much; all kinds of ordinary trials and crimes have political consequences and aspects. The trial and crime of Sirhan Sirhan did. So did the crime of James Earl Ray. In Epstein's usage, however, the term means something more, something sinister, if obscure.

"Not only did the defendants know," writes Epstein, "that [Bobby] Seale had been thrown together with them as the result of a political decision by the Justice Department to 'get' the Panthers, but that the federal indictment itself was consistent, they knew, with Nixon's campaign promise to restore law and order to the country." But the Justice Department's "political" decision to "get" the Panthers—if there was such a decision, which the defendants surely more surmised than knew—is unexceptionable so long as it was a decision to "get" the Panthers for conduct that makes them legally liable to arrest and prosecution, and that has exposed and would expose others to arrest and prosecution. There is no evidence of any different sort of decision taken in the Justice Department. No doubt even a legitimate decision to "get" the Panthers may be political in the sense that the administration thought there was credit to be gained for launching such an enterprise. But our prosecutors are political officers. We invite them to be zealous in the enforcement of the criminal law by holding out a political reward for their zeal. We do not expect all our laws to be enforced with equal vigor all the time. There are too many laws for that, and prosecutors, therefore, have discretion. We demand that in the exercise of their discretion, they act against individuals without fear or favor, but that in each individual case they proceed only if in their best professional judgment the evidence of guilt is convincing and will hold up. Prosecutors are politically rewarded for zeal, but they are to be zealous for justice, not for political reward.

Suppose, now, that as happened to Dr. Spock and others following their trial in Boston a couple of years ago on charges of conspiring to aid draft evaders, and as happened qualifiedly even to Dr. Spock's co-defendant William Sloane Coffin, Jr., who could have been reprosecuted but has not been—supppose that the Chicago defendants and their lawyers succeed on appeal. What will the episode have told us about our law? Like Dr. Spock, these defendants would then have been wrongly subjected to the expense and ordeal of a trial and appeals. But the trial and the appeals are the safeguard of an adversary system of criminal justice, which sustains a presumption of innocence until after conviction. The alternative, considered more oppressive by the framers of the American Constitution, is an inquisitorial proceeding that would establish a higher probability of guilt—easily converted into virtual certainty—before trial. The trial is the cost the adversary sys-

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tem exacts. To be found not guilty is to have an injustice committed on oneself, and the system commits the injustice of finding people innocent in a certain percentage of cases every year, the vast majority of them, of course, having no political content or implications whatever. The prosecutor must have a plausible case to start with, and the question, therefore, about the Chicago trial, should the defendants ultimately prevail, will be whether a prosecutorial abuse of discretion occurred, whether the defendants suffered a special injustice, or simply one that inheres in the system as an unsolved problem, and that we tolerate for lack of preferable alternatives.

The defendants were indicted under a federal anti-riot act, passed in 1968, which makes it a crime to cross a state line with intent to incite, promote, encourage, participate in (or aid anyone in inciting or participating in) a riot, and in the course of the travel or thereafter commit any of these acts, i.e., incite, promote, encourage, aid, etc. The indictment accused the defendants of conspiring to violate this statute, and it also accused each of them of violating it individually.

The evidence of conspiracy, as we now know, was quite flimsy, and the jury returned a verdict of not guilty on this count. (The government has also dismissed the conspiracy count, as well as other charges aside from the contempt conviction, against Bobby Seale, whose case was severed from the main one by Judge Hoffman after some terrible scenes in court.) Much criticism has long been directed—long before there were any Chicago defendants—at various uses of the charge of conspiracy. And one may easily conclude that the bringing of this charge constituted a malfunction of the legal system, perhaps an abuse of prosecutorial discretion. But it remains to be asked whether the case against the defendants was otherwise a plausible one. If so, the defendants would have been properly tried anyway, even if not necessarily together. The question is not whether it was wise to bring the case. That is a political question; if you will, a question of legal statesmanship. Judgments may differ about this question, but nobody (and that includes the defendants) is legally owed one or the other answer to it. The legal plausibility of the charges brought against each of the defendants is another matter. To assess it one must inquire into the applicability of the anti-riot act to the evidence the prosecution had before it, and the constitutionality of the act as so applied. But there is little sense trying to foresee now how persuasive one would find an appellate decision that the verdicts against the defendants either can or cannot stand, that they either do or do not conform to the statute and the Constitution. What can now usefully be attempted is merely to determine whether the prosecution and the jury's verdict, even though in the end they might not be sustained, were legally plausible, rather than manufactured out of whole cloth and based on nothing but prejudice. The issue at this stage, in other words, is whether the defendants were irremediably victimized by a prosecution. On other issues, they still have their remedy.

Inciting to a riot, promoting it, participating in it, and aiding others to do so are activities that the states, which under our system exercise the basic criminal jurisdiction, are perfectly able and willing to deal with. On the general principle, therefore, which is supported by a variety of considerations, that state administration of criminal justice is preferred where it can be effective, the federal anti-riot act is an unwise law. But it takes its place in the statute books next to a number of unwise criminal laws quite similar to it, not least of all the Mann Act of 1910, on which it was largely modeled, and which punishes the transportation of women across state lines "with the intent and purpose . . . to engage in . . . immoral practice." If the anti-riot act is an unconstitutional extension of federal power, the reason, in view of cases affirming the constitutionality of the Mann Act and like legislation, is not that the anti-riot act proscribes crossing a state line with the intent to do something upon arrival, but that the thing to be done upon arrival is protected by the First Amendment, since it includes an element of speech.*

There is another argument to which the statute may be vulnerable. Some of the words it uses—"promote," "encourage"—are quite broad and inclusive, and may be held vague by a court unsympathetic to federal intervention in the administration of the basic criminal law, and sensitive to what is at the very least the nearness of the statute to the area protected by the First Amendment. Holding such words vague, however, a court might interpret the statute to apply more narrowly than it would if these words were given their natural meaning, or it might invalidate it as a whole. Both approaches are open. The first would not necessarily free these defendants. And it is impossible in any event to predict which of these approaches a court might adopt, if either.

Coming, then, to the First Amendment issue, the law of the Constitution generally stated is that discussion of violence or any other illegal act, abstract advocacy of it, even counseling people to

* Epstein picks up a notion that the Constitution requires the intent which is formed on one side of a state line and the conduct engaged in on the other side to be very nearly contemporaneous. But barring some extraordinary set of circumstances, not apparently present in the Chicago case, the example of the Mann Act decisions seems to be against him. Anthony Lukas, for his part, wonders how in the world the law judges a man's intent, which may indeed not be easy, but which the law does in numerous instances. Thus offenses not otherwise subject to federal jurisdiction become federal crimes when they are committed with the intent to deprive someone of his civil rights. The law judges intent by imputing it to an actor or speaker; by asking what a reasonable man would have had in his mind when he did or said a certain thing.

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commit it—all are protected. But violence itself, rioting, destruction of property, and the like, no matter how political the motives from which they proceed or how political the ends they seek, are not protected. Nor is incitement—speech which has the quality of whipping people up to commit violent or other unlawful acts, and is intended to do so. That has been the law, and remains explicitly the law under a 1969 case, *Brandenburg v. Ohio*, which Epstein takes great pains to misread. The question then becomes whether what the defendants—the five who were convicted—said and did in Chicago amounted to intentional incitement, and whether the attitudes they manifested before coming to Chicago, combined with their actions and speeches there, support a finding that before coming to Chicago they had formed the intent to say and do what they said and did once they got there.

The demonstrators asked for but were denied a permit by the City of Chicago. Perhaps this denial was unconstitutional, and the presence of demonstrators in the city's parks and on its streets was lawful. Yet the unconstitutionality of the denial of the permit should not be too lightly assumed. If the city had reason to believe that unlawful acts were planned, it had the authority to deny a permit. And some of the demonstrators, namely the Yippies headed by Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, cheerfully called for such amusements as barricade-jumping and making love in the parks. Not to speak of drug use. Abbie Hoffman later looked upon it all as one big joke. He was just shocking, scaring, and confusing the Chicago officials, all in good clean fun. But these were the officials he was asking for a permit. And he admitted that in asking for the permit, he did nothing to quiet such anxieties as his high spirits may have caused to the straight, up-tight, and otherwise pitiable, scarcely human, beings responsible for the safety and good order of the unworthy people and streets of Chicago. Quite the contrary. Well, good clean fun is one thing. The constitutional duty to grant a permit for a peaceable and lawful demonstration, and the constitutional authority to deny a permit for a demonstration that looks to be disorderly and unlawful, are quite another thing.

NONETHELESS, assuming that the demonstrators were there in the exercise of their constitutional rights, and that the Chicago police from the first harassed them, and then assaulted them illegally and criminally—assuming all that, the defendants may still have intended to come to Chicago to incite to a riot, and may still have committed acts of incitement. They may, as Anthony Lukas rather thinks, have been of two minds on the desirability of a riot, and they may have hoped that the violence they provoked would be mainly that of the police, visible on the TV screens to the defendants' political advantage. Or they, or some of them, may have been more nearly of a single mind. At any rate, in Chicago they made speeches, and if government witnesses are to be believed, said things in smaller meetings, that were blatant incitements to violence. From the constitutional point of view it is hard to see why it should make any difference that the violence that followed was chiefly that of the police. It is hard to see why it should have mattered if no violence had followed. What may constitutionally be punished is incitement to violence. In conditions where no violence is remotely likely, it may be impossible to view a speech as an incitement. But if a speech is an incitement, why should it be necessary that it be a successful one? The point of punishing incitement is to prevent violence, not to wait for it and then have two offenses available for prosecution rather than just one. Finally, it wouldn't matter that there had previously been police violence, unless it could be shown that the defendants arrived with no intention to riot, and formed their purpose to do so only after the police had rioted against them. Otherwise, if the police act unlawfully, even indeed criminally, one night, that should not extend constitutional protection to someone who wishes to incite to a riot the following night.

The evening of August 27 in Lincoln Park, Bobby Seale, the jury was told in Chicago, said something like this to a crowd:

> The time for singing "We Shall Overcome" is past. Now is the time to act, to go buy a 357 magnum, a carbine, and an automatic and kill the pigs. We've got to break up into small groups and create guerrilla warfare everywhere. We can no longer be arrested in large groups or be killed in large groups. We've got to break into small groups and surround the pigs.

Most of Seale's speech was about violence. Violence, he purported to be saying, was to be used in self-defense. But he posited the aggressive brutality of law, of officers of law, and of the whole society. Self-defense was called for because the society was murderous. Seale said:

> So is the white racist wall that we are talking about real or not? You're damned right it's real. Because we are chained to this wall. . . . Make sure, if you want to coalesce, work, functionally organize, that you pick up a crowbar. Pick up a piece. Pick up a gun. And pull that spike out of the wall. Because if you pull it out and you shoot well, all I'm gonna do is pat you on the back and say, "Keep shooting."

This to a crowd which had already been through one night of disturbances. Break up into small groups, Seale went on. "So we can dissemble those pigs who occupy our community like foreign troops."

By small groups dissembling the pigs, Seale said later, he meant small groups of people selling papers and circulating petitions. And as for pick-

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ing up a gun, he was referring merely to the constitutional right of the people to carry arms. But it is an understatement to say that such an explanation might have reminded the jury of the cynical euphemisms of a Southern sheriff explaining why no Negroes vote in his county, or how a prisoner happened to have acquired a lot of black and blue marks by stumbling against the furniture. It is not beneath Epstein to put forth such explanations with a straight face, but that does not make them compelling.

Seale's speech may have been the high-water mark of incitement, and one has the impression that the case against Dellinger was weak. Moreover, so far as the defendants' intentions before coming to Chicago are concerned, the judge excluded some evidence, perhaps wrongly, that may throw a different light. But if government witnesses are to be believed, Hayden, Davis, Abbie Hoffman, and Rubin said enough about smashing windows, breaking up, tying up, and violating the city, letting blood flow, and killing pigs to make out a prima-facie case of incitement against them as well. It bears repeating that one may believe that there was a police riot in Chicago in 1968, and think it an outrage that no policeman should have been brought to book for it. Yet there is no legal absolution in this for the defendants, if they also rioted or incited to riot and had intended to do so. There may be political absolution in it, but not legal.

WHATEVER AN appellate court may decide about the sufficiency of the evidence to support a conviction under the anti-riot act and the constitutionality of that act as applied to the evidence, the prosecution of these defendants—with the possible exception of Dellinger—was itself no violation of legal norms. It was a political move, no doubt, but not one without the law. The case was plausible.

Additional legal issues abound, of course, but as to these, the defendants have an effective remedy on appeal. If there is going to be injustice, the legal order has not committed it as yet. An issue that may alone be decisive is whether Judge Hoffman or federal marshals communicated with the jury in the absence of defendants and their counsel. The court of appeals in Chicago has asked the judge to hold a special hearing on this issue. Among other legal questions, one or two are mountainous molehills. A few are quite serious.

The indictment was returned by a grand jury that Judge William Campbell, chief judge, at the time, of the United States District Court in Chicago, specially charged to look into the events of August 1968. Epstein makes an enormous amount of this, but despite all the dust he kicks up, it is a molehill. What there is to be said in the end is that such a special charge to a grand jury is unusual these days, but not illegal, nor terribly significant. Grand juries generally do what the prosecutor suggests they do, and Judge Campbell and Foran, the U.S. Attorney in Chicago, were certainly not pulling in different directions. So Judge Campbell cannot have made much difference. There is evidence that Ramsey Clark, the outgoing U.S. Attorney General, was not eager for an indictment. Had he remained in office, he could have prevented one by the simple expedient of instructing Foran not to sign it. He could also have instructed Foran not to seek an indictment, regardless of what Judge Campbell had to say. He issued no such instructions. There were political pressures at work, perhaps, but strong-minded Attorneys General are there to resist them if they feel they must. Clark's successor, who gladly let this indictment go forward, not long ago, in a different sort of case, stopped an indictment against the wishes of the local U.S. Attorney, who appeared to be as much supported by the local federal district judge as Foran was by Judge Campbell. Clark's predecessor also had occasion once to do the same thing.

In the course of preliminaries to the trial, the government admitted that it had listened in over a period of time on telephone conversations of five of the defendants. The fruit of such wiretaps could not as of then be used directly or indirectly by the prosecution, and the transcripts had to be turned over to the defense. This was done, except that transcripts of some conversations with foreign embassies were withheld. Epstein makes much of a decision announced by the Supreme Court just as the question of the taps was emerging in Chicago, apparently holding that the transcripts of the embassy taps would have to be handed over. But he fudges a clarification soon issued by the Supreme Court indicating that the question whether transcripts of foreign embassy taps must be handed over had not been decided, and remained open. This issue may yet assume importance in appellate consideration of the case, but Judge Hoffman and the government both disposed of it as they were legally free to do in the absence of a contrary direction from the Supreme Court.

During the trial itself, errors were undoubtedly committed, and it is possible that some of them vitiated the trial. The judge was confronted with defendants, and in Kunstler, it is fair to say, with at least one defense lawyer, who were more interested in the verdict of the streets and of the press than in the verdict of the jury. That this is a despicable and destructive attitude is sufficiently demonstrated by asking whether anyone would like to see a Deep South sheriff accused of depriving people of their civil rights equally tried in the streets and in the media, rather than in a courtroom governed by a federal judge? Yet, though perhaps no judge could have been, it is fairly clear that Judge Hoffman was not temperamentally suited to the trials of this trial. For one thing, he intruded himself—Julius Hoffman, not

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the judge—often and imprudently. He was engaged, embattled.

Right at the start, Judge Hoffman exercised his discretion unwisely—and with dreadful consequences. He might have granted a postponement until Bobby Seale's preferred lawyer could come and represent him. Of course, defendants cannot be given a right to hold up trials indefinitely so they can get just the lawyer they want. But Seale's lawyer was undergoing an operation. A postponement of a few weeks could have been granted. Later, Seale's case could have been severed after he provoked the very first disturbances, all on the subject of wanting his preferred lawyer, or to represent himself. Then he would not have been gagged and bound, which is an appalling thing to do, however legal. Indeed the gagging and binding were in any event not necessary. Seale could have been excluded from the courtroom.

None of this is to say that Seale's conduct in court should have been condoned. Nor was the conduct of the other defendants or their lawyers to be condoned. If Judge Hoffman gave the defense lawyers little benefit of the doubt, if he was sharp and wary, part of the reason is that the lawyers early destroyed the confidence that normally prevails between a judge and officers of his court, which is what lawyers are. But the sentences for contempt were assuredly harsh, and the number of individual instances of contempt that the judge meticulously piled up border on the absurd. As handed down after trial, by the judge against whom the contempts had been committed, and by a judge who succeeded in maintaining as little distance as Judge Hoffman maintained, the convictions and sentences may well be held altogether unlawful.

The trial, Professor Harry Kalven, Jr., of the University of Chicago Law School, has written, "was a mess and a loss for the society as a whole." It was "a reckless squandering of the prestige of the legal order."* I think that is substantially true—for the short term. But the losses incurred by the legal order can be recouped on appeal, and even turned into advances. It is quite possible that the trial will result in a better law of contempt, and in clarification of the law of the First Amendment. The loss to the society, the defendants' political gain, may be less easily recouped. Books such as Epstein's, let alone Hayden's, try to compound it, and may in some measure succeed. And yet perhaps they do not. This is a free society, and its revolutionaries and their apologists cannot resist the invitation to avail themselves of the society's freedom of speech. Thus in the end perhaps they will unmask themselves. The faith embodied in the First Amendment is not only that in a free society few will want to make a revolution, but that where the revolutionary idea may be freely ventilated, it will defeat itself.

* Harry Kalven, Jr., "Chicago Howler," the *New Republic,* March 7, 1970, pp. 21-23.

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The Holiness of Sin

Gershom Scholem

Since its original appearance in Hebrew in the mid-30's under the title "Mitzvah ha-Ba'ah ba-Averah," GERSHOM SCHOLEM'S *study of those Jews of the 18th and 19th centuries who clung to their belief in the Messiahship of Sabbatai Zevi even after his conversion to Islam, has been widely regarded as one of the classics of modern Jewish scholarship and one of the great works of the historical imagination in our time. What follows is the first translation of that essay into English, done by Hillel Halkin; the text has not been cut or altered in any way except for the elimination of certain footnote references. The essay will also be included (with the footnotes retained) under the title "Redemption Through Sin" in* The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality *which Schocken Books will be issuing shortly.*

Among Gershom Scholem's other books which have been translated into English are Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism *and* On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism. *Readers of the present essay will be particularly interested to learn that Professor Scholem's two-volume work on Sabbatai Zevi, published about ten years ago in Hebrew, is being readied by the Princeton University Press for publication in an English translation within the coming months.*

NO CHAPTER IN the history of the Jewish people during the last several hundred years has been as shrouded in mystery as that of the Sabbatian movement. On one point, at least, there is no longer any disagreement: the dramatic events and widespread religious revival that preceded the apostasy of Sabbatai Zevi in 1666 form an important and integral part of Jewish history and deserve to be studied objectively, to the exclusion of moralistic condemnations of the historical figures involved. It has come increasingly to be realized that a true understanding of the rise of Sabbatianism will never be possible as long as scholars continue to appraise it by inappropriate standards, whether these be the conventional beliefs of their own age or the values of traditional Judaism itself. Today indeed one rarely encounters the baseless assumptions of "charlatanry" and "imposture" which occupy so prominent a place in earlier historical literature on the subject. On the contrary: in these times of Jewish national rebirth it is only natural that the deep though ultimately tragic yearning for national redemption to which the initial stages of Sabbatianism gave expression should meet with greater comprehension than in the past.

In turning to consider the Sabbatian movement after Sabbatai Zevi's conversion to Islam, however, we are faced with an entirely different situation. Here we find ourselves still standing before a blank wall, not only of misunderstanding, but often of an actual refusal to understand. Even in recent times there has been a definite tendency among scholars to minimize at all costs the significance of this "heretical" Sabbatianism, with the result that no adequate investigation yet exists of its spiritual foundations, its overall impact on 18th-century Jewry, or its ultimate fate. It is impossible, in fact, to read any of the studies that have been done in these areas without being astounded by the amount of invective directed against the leaders and adherents of the various Sabbatian sects. Typical of this approach is David Kahana's *A History of the Kabbalists, Sabbatians, and Hasidim* (in Hebrew), but the angry moralizing that characterizes this volume has not been confined to any one historical school; rather, it has been shared by writers of widely differing points of view, secular as well as religious. The problem itself, meanwhile, remains as recondite as ever.

Two enormous difficulties, therefore, confront the student of the Sabbatian "heresies": on the one hand, there are the obstacles posed by the sources themselves, and on the other, those created by the attitude generally taken toward them. To a great extent, moreover, these two sets of difficulties have always been related.

Why should this be so?

The Sabbatian movement in its various shadings and configurations persisted with remarkable obstinacy among certain sectors of the Jewish

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people for approximately one hundred and fifty years after Sabbatai Zevi's conversion. In a number of countries it grew to be powerful, but for various reasons, internal as well as external, its affairs were deliberately hidden from the public eye. In particular, its spokesmen refrained from committing their beliefs to print, and the few books that they actually published concealed twice what they revealed. They did, however, produce a rich literature, which circulated only among groups of "believers" (*ma'aminim*)—the term by which Sabbatian sectarians generally chose to refer to themselves, down to the last of the Dönmeh in Salonika and the last Frankists in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As long as Sabbatianism remained a vital force within the Jewish ghetto, threatening to undermine the very existence of rabbinic Judaism, its opponents labored ceaselessly to root it out and systematically destroyed whatever of its writings came into their possession, "including [even] the sacred names of God [*azkarot*] which they contain," as the bans upon them read. As a result many of their writings were lost without a trace, and had it been left solely up to the rabbinical authorities nothing would have come down to us at all except for certain tendentiously chosen fragments quoted in anti-Sabbatian polemics. In addition, although an extensive religious literature was still to be found in the hands of Frankists in Moravia and Bohemia at the beginning of the 19th century, the children and grandchildren of these "believ ers" in Prague and other Jewish centers themselves attempted to obliterate every shred of evidence bearing on their ancestors' beliefs and practices. The well-known philosopher and historian of atheism Fritz Mauthner has preserved the following interesting story in his memoirs: in the declining days of the movement in Bohemia, Frankist "emissaries" came to his grandfather (and undoubtedly to other members of the sect as well) and requested that he surrender to them a picture of "the Lady" and "all kinds of writings" which he had in his possession. The emissaries took them and left. The incident took place sometime during the 1820's or 1830's. In spite of all this, at least two large manuscripts from these circles have survived.

One must therefore bear in mind in dealing with the history of Sabbatianism that powerful interests and emotions have often been at stake. Each for reasons of his own, all those who have written on the subject in the past shared one belief: the less importance attributed to the Sabbatian movement, the better.

AUTHORS AND HISTORIANS of the Orthodox camp, for their part, have been anxious to belittle and even distort the overall role of Sabbatianism in order to safeguard the reputations, as they have conceived of them, of certain honored religious figures of the past. Such apologetics have had their inevitable effect upon the writing of history, as has the fundamental outlook of their proponents, tending as it does to idealize religious life in the ghetto at the expense of completely ignoring the deep inner conflicts and divisions to which not even the rabbis were necessarily immune. To acknowledge the Sabbatianism of eminent rabbis in Jerusalem, Adrianople, Constantinople, or Izmir, Prague, Hamburg, or Berlin, has been in the eyes of such authors openly to impeach the integrity of an entire body of men who were never supposed to be other than learned and virtuous defenders of Jewish tradition. Given such an attitude, it is hardly to be wondered at that one should instinctively avoid the kinds of inquiry that might lead to the discovery of heretical opinion, to say nothing of actual licentiousness, in the most unlikely places. One might cite endless examples of this kind of mentality in historical literature dealing with rabbinical and congregational life in the 18th century, and in at least one case, A. L. Frumkin's *A Historical Account of the Scholars of Jerusalem* (in Hebrew), the author goes so far as to "acquit" some of the most dedicated Sabbatians of the "scandal" of heterodoxy!

Secularist historians, on the other hand, have been at pains to deemphasize the role of Sabbatianism for a different reason. Not only did most of the families once associated with the Sabbatian movement in Western and Central Europe continue to remain afterward within the Jewish fold, but many of their descendants, particularly in Austria, rose to positions of importance during the 19th century as prominent intellectuals, great financiers, and men of high political connections. Such persons, needless to say, could scarcely have been expected to approve of attempts to "expose" their "tainted" lineage, and in view of their stature in the Jewish community it is not surprising that their wishes should have carried weight. Furthermore, in an age when Jewish scholarship itself was considered to be in part an extension of the struggle for political emancipation, the climate for research in so sensitive an area was by no means generally favorable. In consequence, those Jewish scholars who had access to the wealth of Sabbatian documents and eyewitness reports that were still to be found early in the century failed to take advantage of the opportunity, while by the time a later generation arrived on the scene the sources had been destroyed and were no longer available even to anyone who might have desired to make use of them.

The survivors of the Frankists in Poland and of Dönmeh or "apostates" in Salonika formed yet a third group having a direct interest in disguising the historical facts. These two Sabbatian sects, both of which formally renounced the Jewish religion (the Dönmeh converting to Islam in 1683, the Frankists to Catholicism in 1759), continued to adhere to their secret identities long

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after their defection from their mother faith; the Dönmeh, in fact, did not disappear until the present generation, while in the case of the Frankists, whose history in the course of the 19th century is obscure, it is impossible to determine at exactly what point in time they were finally swallowed up by the rest of Polish society. There is reason to suspect that until the eve of World War I many original manuscripts and documents were preserved by both these groups, particularly by a number of Frankist families in Warsaw; but how much of this material may yet be uncovered, and how much has been purposely destroyed by its owners in order to conceal forever the secret of their descent, is in no way ascertainable.

Nevertheless, the total picture is not as dark as it may seem to have been painted: despite the many efforts at suppression, which supplemented, as it were, the inevitable "selective" process of time itself, a considerable amount of valuable material has been saved. Many of the accusations made against the "believers" by their opponents can now be weighed (and more often than not confirmed!) on the basis of a number of the "believers'" own books which were not allowed to perish. Little by little our knowledge has grown, and although many of the historical details we would like to know will undoubtedly never come to light at all, there is reason to hope that this important chapter in Jewish history will yet be fully written. In any event, it is clear that a correct understanding of the Sabbatian movement after the apostasy of Sabbatai Zevi will provide a new clue toward understanding the history of the Jews in the 18th century as a whole, and in particular, the beginnings of the Haskalah (Enlightenment) movement in a number of countries.

I do not propose in this essay to trace the outward history of Sabbatianism in its several manifestations over the century and a half in which it retained its vitality, nor (although I can hardly conceal my opinion that the entire movement was far more widespread than is generally conceded even today) do I mean to debate the question of whether this or that particular individual was or was not a Sabbatian himself. Suffice it to say that the sources in our possession, meager as they are, make it perfectly clear that the number of Sabbatian rabbis was far greater than has been commonly estimated, greater even than was believed by that anti-Sabbatian zealot Rabbi Jacob Emden, who has almost always been accused of exaggeration. In the present essay, however, I shall put such questions aside and limit myself to the area that has been the most sadly neglected in the entire field, namely, the origins and development of Sabbatian thought per se.

If one accepts what Heinrich Graetz and David Kahana have to say on the subject of Sabbatian theology, it is impossible to understand what its essential attraction ever was; indeed, if it is true, as both these writers claim, that the entire movement was a colossal hoax perpetrated by degenerates and frauds, one might well ask why a serious historian should bother to waste his time on it in the first place. And if this is the case with Sabbatianism in general, how much more so when one ventures to consider what is undoubtedly the most tragic episode in the entire drama, that of the Frankists, the psychological barriers to the understanding of which are incomparably greater. How, for instance, can one get around the historical fact that in the course of their public disputation with Jewish rabbis in Lvov in 1759 the members of this sect did not even shrink from resorting to the notorious blood libel, an accusation far more painful to Jewish sensitivities than any of their actual beliefs? A great deal has been written about this incident, particularly by the eminent historian Meir Balaban, in whose book, *On the History of the Frankist Movement* (in Hebrew), it is dealt with exhaustively. Balaban, who makes the Lvov libel a starting point for his overall inquiry, reaches the significant conclusion that there was no organic connection between it and the Frankist "articles of faith" presented at the disputation. The members of the sect, in fact, were reluctant to make the accusation at all, and did so only at the instigation of the Catholic clergy, which was interested in using them for purposes of its own, having nothing to do with their Sabbatian background. That they finally agreed to collaborate in the scheme can be explained by their desire to wreak vengeance on their rabbinical persecutors.

THUS, THOUGH the behavior of the Frankists at Lvov must certainly be judged harshly from both a universal-ethical and a Jewish-national point of view, it is important to keep in mind that the blood libels against the Jews (the indications are that there was more than one) do not in themselves tell us anything about the inner spiritual world of the sect, in all of whose literature (written one and two generations after the Lvov disputation) not a single allusion to such a belief is to be found. The truly astonishing thing is that although several important texts of Frankist teachings actually do exist, not a single serious attempt has so far been made to analyze their contents. The reason for this is simple. Graetz and A. Kraushar, two reputable scholars, one of whom wrote a full-length study of Jacob Frank and his Polish followers, were both of the opinion that there was no such thing as a Frankist "creed," and that *The Sayings of the Lord*, which has come down to us in a Polish version alone, was incoherent nonsense. According to Kraushar, Frank's sayings are "grotesque, comical, and incomprehensible," while Graetz, whose attitude toward all forms of mysticism is well known, could hardly have been expected to show much insight into the religious motivations of the sect. Balaban, on the other

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hand, is mainly concerned with the outward history of the Frankists up to the time of their mass conversion, and his reconstruction of their theology is based solely on the positions publicly taken by them in their disputations with the rabbis. It is his reliance on these "articles of faith," in fact, which were actually far from accurate reflections of the Frankists' true beliefs, that leads him to conclude that after 1759 the history of the sect was "determined more by the personalities of Jacob Frank and his disciples than by any intrinsic religious relationship to Judaism."

I myself cannot agree with Balaban on this point, and in the following pages I shall attempt to show, at least summarily, that Sabbatianism must be regarded not only as a single continuous development which retained its identity in the eyes of its adherents regardless of whether they themselves remained Jews or not, but also, paradoxical though it may seem, as a specifically *Jewish* phenomenon to the end. I shall endeavor to show that the nihilism of the Sabbatian and Frankist movements, with its doctrine—so profoundly shocking to the Jewish conception of things—that the violation of the Torah could become its true fulfillment (*bittulah shel torah zehu kiyyumah*), was a dialectical outgrowth of the belief in the Messiahship of Sabbatai Zevi, and that this nihilism, in turn, helped pave the way for the Haskalah and the Reform movement of the 19th century, once its original religious impulse was exhausted. Beyond this, I hope to make the reader see how within the spiritual world of the Sabbatian sects, within the very *sanctum sanctorum* of Kabbalistic mysticism, as it were, the crisis of faith which overtook the Jewish people as a whole upon its emergence from its medieval isolation was first anticipated, and how groups of Jews within the walls of the ghetto, while still outwardly adhering to the practices of their forefathers, had begun to embark on a radically new inner life of their own. Prior to the French Revolution the historical conditions were lacking which might have caused this upheaval to break forth in the form of an open struggle for social change, with the result that it turned further inward upon itself to act upon the hidden recesses of the Jewish psyche; but it would be mistaken to conclude from this that Sabbatianism did not permanently affect the outward course of Jewish history. The desire for total liberation which played so tragic a role in the development of Sabbatian nihilism was by no means a purely self-destructive force; on the contrary, beneath the surface of lawlessness, antinomianism, and catastrophic negation, powerful constructive impulses were at work, and these, I maintain, it is the duty of the historian to uncover.

Undeniably, the difficulties in the face of this are great, and it is not to be wondered at that Jewish historians until now have not had the inner freedom to attempt the task. In our own times we owe much to the experience of Zionism for enabling us to detect in Sabbatianism's throes those gropings toward a healthier national existence which must have seemed like an undiluted nightmare to the peaceable Jewish bourgeois of the 19th century. Even today, however, the writing of Jewish history suffers unduly from the influence of 19th-century Jewish historiography. To be sure, as Jewish historians we have clearly advanced beyond the vantage point of our predecessors, having learned to insist, and rightly so, that Jewish history is a process that can only be understood when viewed from *within*; but in spite of all this, our progress in applying this truth to concrete historical situations, as opposed to general historiosophical theories, has been slow. Up to the present [1935—Ed.] only two men, Siegmund Hurwitz in his *From Whither to Where* (in Hebrew) and Zalman Rubashov (Shazar) in his essay "Upon the Ruins of Frankism" (in Hebrew), have shown any true appreciation of the complexities of Sabbatian psychology, and their work has by and large failed to attract the attention it deserves.

And now, one last introductory comment. In dismissing the need for objective research on the Sabbatian and Frankist movements, it has often been asserted that since the phenomena are essentially pathological, they belong more properly to the study of medicine than to the study of history. Indeed, an article on "Frank and His Sect in the Light of Psychiatry" (Bychowski, *Ha-Tekufah,* Vol. XIV) has actually been published, but it only succeeds in demonstrating how incapable such an approach is of dealing satisfactorily with the problem. From the standpoint of sexual pathology it can hardly be doubted that Frank himself was a diseased individual, just as there can be no question that at the center and among the ranks of the Sabbatian movement (as in all radical movements that spring from certain particular tensions, some of which are not so far removed from those of "ordinary" life) it would be possible to find cases of marked mental aberrance. But what is the significance of all this? We are not, after all, so much concerned with this or that prominent Sabbatian personality as with the question of why such people were able to attract the following that they did. The diagnosis of a neurologist would be of little value in determining why thousands of human beings were able to find a spiritual home in the labyrinth of Sabbatian theology. We must refuse to be deluded by such convenient tags as "hysteria" or "mass psychosis," which only confuse the issue at the same time that they provide an excuse for avoiding it and comfortably reassure one of one's own comparative "normality." It is undoubtedly true that Jacob Frank was every bit the depraved and unscrupulous person he is supposed to have been, and yet the moment we seriously ponder his

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"teachings," or attempt to understand why masses of men should have regarded him as their leader and prophet, this same individual becomes highly problematic. Even more than the psychology of the leader, however, it is the psychology of the led that demands to be understood, and in the case of Sabbatianism, a movement built entirely upon paradoxes, this question is crucial indeed. Whatever we may think of Sabbatai Zevi and Jacob Frank, the fact is: their followers, while they were certainly not "innocents"—if there was one thing lacking in the paradoxical religion of the Sabbatians, it was innocence!—were sincere in their faith, and it is the nature of this faith, which penetrated to the hidden depths and abysses of the human spirit, that we wish to understand.

II

As a mystical heterodoxy Sabbatianism assumed different and changing forms: it splintered into many sects, so that even from the polemical writings against it we learn that the "heretics" quarreled among themselves over practically everything. The word "practically," however, must be stressed, for on one essential, the underlying ground of their "holy faith," as they called it, the "believers" all agreed. Let us proceed then to examine this common ground of faith as it manifested itself both psychologically and dogmatically.

By all accounts, the messianic revival of 1665-66 spread to every sector of the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora. Among the believers and penitents a new emotion, which was not restricted to the traditional expectation of a political deliverance of Israel alone, began to make itself felt. This is not to say that hope for a divine liberation from the bondage and degradation of exile was not an important element in the general contagion, but rather that various psychological reactions which accompanied it soon took on an independent existence of their own. Prior to Sabbatai Zevi's apostasy, great masses of people were able to believe in perfect simplicity that a new era of history was being ushered in and that they themselves had already begun to inhabit a new and redeemed world. Such a belief could not but have a profound effect on those who held it: their innermost feelings, which assured them of the presence of a messianic reality, seemed entirely in harmony with the outward course of events, those climactic developments in a historico-political realm that Sabbatai Zevi was soon to overthrow by means of his miraculous journey to the Turkish sultan, whom he would depose from his throne and strip of all his powers.

In the generation preceding Sabbatai Zevi's advent the rapid spread of the teachings of Rabbi Isaac Luria and his school had resulted in a grafting of the theories of the Kabbalists, the *de facto* theologians of the Jewish people in the 17th century, onto the traditional Jewish view of the role and personality of the Messiah. Mystical Lurianic speculations about the nature of the redemption and "the restored world" (*olam ha-tikkun*) which was to follow upon its heels added new contents and dimensions to the popular messianic folk-myth of a conquering national hero, raising it to the level of a supreme cosmic drama: the redemptive process was now no longer conceived of as simply a working-out of Israel's temporal emancipation from the yoke of the Gentiles, but rather as a fundamental transformation of the entire Creation, affecting material and spiritual worlds alike and leading to a rectification of the primordial catastrophe of the "breaking of the vessels" (*shevirat ha-kelim*), in the course of which the divine worlds would be returned to their original unity and perfection. By stressing the spiritual side of the redemption far more than its outward aspect, the Kabbalists of the Lurianic school, though by no means overlooking the latter, gradually converted it into a symbol of purely spiritual processes and ends. As long as the messianic expectancies they encouraged were not put to the test in the actual crucible of history, the dangers inherent in this shift of emphasis went unnoticed, for the Kabbalists themselves never once imagined that a conflict might arise between the symbol and the reality it was intended to represent. To be sure, Lurianic Kabbalah had openly educated its followers to prepare themselves more for an inner than for an outer renewal; but inasmuch as it was commonly assumed that the one could not take place without the other, the procedure seemed in no way questionable. On the contrary: the spread of Lurianic teachings, so it was thought, was in itself bound to hasten the coming of the historical Redeemer.

The appearance of Sabbatai Zevi and the growth of popular faith in his mission caused this inner sense of freedom, of "a world made pure again," to become an immediate reality for thousands. This did not of course mean that Sabbatai Zevi himself was no longer expected to fulfill the various messianic tasks assigned him by Jewish tradition, but in the meantime an irreversible change had taken place in the souls of the faithful. Who could deny that the *Shekhinah*, the earthly presence of God, had risen from the dust?

"Heretical" Sabbatianism was born at the moment of Sabbatai Zevi's totally unexpected conversion, when for the first time a contradiction appeared between the two levels of the drama of redemption, that of the subjective experience of the individual on the one hand, and that of the objective historical facts on the other. The conflict was no less intense than unforeseen. One had to choose: either one heard the voice of God in the decree of history, or else one heard it in the newly revealed reality within. "Heretical" Sabbatianism was the result of the refusal of large sections of the Jewish people to submit to the

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sentence of history by admitting that their own personal experience had been false and untrustworthy.

Thus, the various attempts to construct a Sabbatian theology were all motivated by a similar purpose, namely, to rationalize the abyss that had suddenly opened between the objective order of things and that inward certainty which it could no longer serve to symbolize, and to render the tension between the two more endurable for those who continued to live with it. The sense of contradiction from which Sabbatianism sprung became a lasting characteristic of the movement: following upon the initial paradox of an apostate Messiah, paradox engendered paradox. Above all, the "believers," those who remained loyal to their inward experience, were compelled to find an answer to the simple question: what could be the value of a historical reality that had proved to be so bitterly disappointing, and how might it be related to the hopes it had betrayed?

The essence of the Sabbatian's conviction, in other words, can be summarized in a sentence: it is inconceivable that all of God's people should inwardly err, and so, if their vital experience is contradicted in the facts, it is the facts which stand in need of explanation. In the words of a Sabbatian "moderate" writing thirty years after Sabbatai Zevi's apostasy: "The Holy One, blessed be He, does not ensnare even the animals of the righteous, much less the righteous themselves, to say nothing of so terribly deceiving an entire people. . . . And how is it possible that all of Israel be deceived unless this be part of some great divine plan?" This line of argument, which was adopted by many persons from the very beginning of the Sabbatian movement, is known to have impressed even the movement's opponents, who were equally disinclined to find fault with the entire Jewish people and sought instead some other explanation for what had happened.

During the century and a half of its existence Sabbatianism was embraced by those Jewish circles which desired to prolong the novel sensation of living in a "restored world" by developing attitudes and institutions that seemed commensurate with a new divine order. Inasmuch as this deliberately maintained state of consciousness was directly opposed to the outlook of ghetto Jewry as a whole, of which the "believers" themselves formed a part, the latter of necessity tended to become innovators and rebels, particularly the radicals among them. Herein lay the psychological basis of that spirit of revolt which so infuriated the champions of Orthodoxy, who, though they may at first have had no inkling of the lengths to which it would be ultimately carried, rightly suspected it from the outset of striving to subvert the authority of rabbinic Judaism. Herein, too, lay the basis of all future efforts to construct a Sabbatian theology, to the consideration of which we must now turn our attention.

IN THE HISTORY of religion we frequently encounter types of individuals known as "pneumatics" (*pneumatikoi*) or "spiritualists" (*spirituales*). Such persons, who played a major role in the development of Sabbatianism, were known in Jewish tradition as "spiritual" or "extra-spirited" men or, in the language of the *Zohar*, as "masters of a holy soul." These terms did not refer to just anyone who may have had occasion in the course of his life to be "moved by the spirit"; rather, they applied only to those few who abode in the "palace of the king" (*hekhal ha-melekh*), that is, who lived in continual communion with a spiritual realm through whose gates they had passed, whether by actually dwelling within it to the point of abandoning their previous existence, or by appropriating from it a "spark" or "holy soul," as only the elect were privileged to do. One so favored was in certain respects no longer considered to be subject to the laws of everyday reality, having realized within himself the hidden world of divine light. Naturally, spiritualistic types of this sort have always regarded themselves as forming a group apart, and hence the special sense of their own "superiority" by which they are characterized: from their lofty perspective the world of material affairs tends to look lowly indeed. Here, then, we have all the prerequisites for the sectarian disposition, for the sect serves the *illuminati* as both a rallying point for their own kind and a refuge from the incomprehension of the carnal and unenlightened masses. The sectarians regard themselves as the vanguard of a new world, but they do not therefore need to renounce the parent religion which inspired them, for they can always reinterpret it in the light of the supreme reality to which they owe their newly discovered allegiance.

For a number of reasons, which cannot be gone into here, such spiritualists were rarely allowed to develop within the Jewish community after the period of the Second Temple. In part this was a consequence of Christianity, to which many of them ultimately passed; but even when they continued to exist within Judaism itself, it was always as isolated and unorganized individuals. It is a well-known fact, for instance, that spiritualism particularly abounds in the domain of religious mysticism; and yet, as the history of Kabbalism amply demonstrates, despite the opposition between conventional religion and the ecstasy, at times even abandon, of the pneumatic, medieval Judaism was capable of absorbing the latter into its orbit. Such was not the case, however, with either Christianity or Islam: here the conflict broke out openly and fiercely on numerous occasions, and the spiritualist sects which it produced went on to play important roles in the development of new social and religious institutions, often giving birth, albeit in religious guise, to the most revolutionary ideas. To take but one example, historical research during the last several

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decades has clearly shown the direct connection between Christian sectarianism in Europe and the growth of the Enlightenment and the ideal of toleration in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The existence of similar forces in Jewish history, on the other hand, has been all but neglected by the historians, an oversight facilitated by the fact that Jewish spiritualism has either long been outwardly dormant or else, as in the case of Kabbalism, has always preferred to work invisibly and unsystematically beneath the surface. Indeed, as long as Jewish historiography was dominated by a spirit of assimilation, no one so much as suspected that positivism and religious reform were the progeny not only of the rational mind, but of an entirely different sort of psychology as well, that of the Kabbalah and the Sabbatian crisis—in other words, of that very "lawless heresy" which was so soundly excoriated in their name!

IN THE Sabbatian movement, which was the first clear manifestation (one might better say *explosion*) of spiritualistic sectarianism in Judaism since the days of the Second Temple, the type of the radical spiritualist found its perfect expression. To be sure, *illuminati* of the same class were later prevalent in Hasidism too, particularly during the golden age of the movement; but Hasidism, rather than allow itself to be taken over by such types, forced them after a period of initial equivocation to curb their unruly spirituality, and did so with such success that it was able to overcome the most difficult and hazardous challenge of all, that of safely incorporating them into its own collective body. Unlike Sabbatianism, whose followers were determined to carry their doctrine to its ultimate conclusion, it was the genius of Hasidism that it knew where to set itself limits. But the Sabbatians pressed on to the end, into the abyss of the mythical "gates of impurity" (*sha'are tum'ah*), where the pure spiritual awareness of a world made new became a pitfall fraught with peril for the moral life.

Here, then, were all the materials necessary to cause a true conflagration in the heart of Jewry. A new type of Jew had appeared for whom the world of exile and Diaspora Judaism was partly or wholly abolished and who uncompromisingly believed that a "restored world," whose laws and practices he was commanded to obey, was in the process of coming into being. The great historical disappointment experienced by the Sabbatian had instilled in him the paradoxical conviction that he and his like were privy to a secret whose time had not yet come to be generally revealed, and it was this certainty which, in Hebrew literature of the period, imparted a special meaning to his use of the terms "believer" and "holy faith," the peculiar shadings of which immediately inform us that we are dealing with a Sabbatian document even when there is not the slightest allusion therein to Sabbatai Zevi himself: by virtue of his "holy faith" in the mysterious realignment of the divine worlds and in the special relationship to them of the Creator during the transitional period of cosmic restitution *(tikkun)*, the "believer," he who trusted in the mission of Sabbatai Zevi, was exalted above all other men. Hidden in the "believer's" soul was a precious jewel, the pearl of messianic freedom, which shone forth from its chamber of chambers to pierce the opaqueness of evil and materiality; he who possessed it was a free man by power of his own personal experience, and to this inner sense of freedom, whether gotten during the mass revival that preceded Sabbatai Zevi's apostasy, or afterward, in the ranks of "holy faith," he would continue to cling no matter how much he knew it to be contradicted by the outward facts.

All Sabbatian doctrine had as its aim the resolution of this contradition. The conflict was bitterly clear. Those who were disillusioned by Sabbatai Zevi's apostasy were able to claim that nothing had really changed: the world was the same as ever, the exile was no different than before; therefore the Torah was the same Torah and the familiar Kabbalistic teachings about the nature of the Godhead and the divine worlds remained in force. A great opportunity had perhaps existed, but it had been missed: henceforth the one recourse was a return to Israel's traditional faith in its God. The "believers," on the other hand, could say, in paraphrase of Job, "our eyes have beheld and not another's": the redemption had begun indeed, only its ways were mysterious and its outward aspect was still incomplete. Externals might seem the same, but inwardly all was in the process of renewal. Both the Torah and the exile had been fundamentally altered, as had the nature of the Godhead, but for the time being all these transformations bore "inward faces" alone.

The Sabbatian movement soon developed all the psychological characteristics of a spiritual sect, and before long many of its followers proceeded to organize themselves along such lines. The persecutions against them on the part of various rabbinical and congregational authorities, their own special feeling of apartness and the need to preserve their secret, and the novel practices which their beliefs eventually compelled them to pursue, were all factors in bringing this about. I do not propose to dwell at length on the history of any of these groups, but I do wish to emphasize briefly at this point that large numbers of Jews, especially among the Sephardim, continued to remain faithful to Sabbatai Zevi after his conversion. Even such opponents of Sabbatianism as Jacob Sasportas, who claimed that the followers of the movement were now an "insubstantial minority," was forced to admit on other occasions that the minority in question was considerable indeed, particularly in Morocco, Palestine, Egypt, and most of Turkey

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and the Balkans. Most of the Sabbatian groups in these areas maintained constant contact with each other and kept up a running battle over the correct interpretation of their "holy faith." From these regions came the first theoreticians of the movement, men such as Nathan of Gaza, Samuel Primo, Abraham Miguel Cardozo, and Nehemiah Hayon as well as the believers in "voluntary Marranism," who went on to form the sect of the Dönmeh in Salonika. In Italy the number of Sabbatians was smaller, though it included some of the country's most important Kabbalists; within a generation after its appearance there, Sabbatianism had dwindled into the concern of a few rabbis and scholars (chief among them Rabbi Benjamin Cohen of Reggio and Rabbi Abraham Rovigo of Modena), in whose hands it remained for a century without ever penetrating into wider circles.

In Northern Europe Sabbatianism was also restricted at first to small groups of adherents, devotees of such "prophets" as Heshel Zoref of Vilna and Mordecai of Eisenstadt in Hungary, but after 1700, following the commencement of a "Palestinian period" during which organized Sabbatian emigrations to the Holy Land took place from several countries, the movement spread rapidly through Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In Lithuania it failed to take root, but in Podolia and Moravia it became so entrenched that it was soon able to claim the allegiance of many ordinary Jewish burghers and small businessmen (according to Jacob Emden, the numerical value of the Hebrew letters in the verse in Psalms 14, "There is none that doeth good, not even one," was equivalent to the numerical value of the letters in the Hebrew word for Moravia!). In Prague and Mannheim Sabbatian-oriented centers of learning came into being. The influence of the "graduates" of these institutions was great; one of them, in fact, was the author of the heretical treatise *Va-Avo ha-Yom El ha-Ayin* ("And I Came This Day unto the Fountain") which provoked so much furor at the time of the controversy surrounding Jonathan Eibeschütz (1751) and led to a polemical "battle of the books" which has enabled us to trace the identities of many Sabbatians of whom otherwise we would have known nothing at all. In the middle of the 18th century many of the Sabbatians in Podolia converted to Christianity after the example of their leader Jacob Frank, but still others remained within the Jewish fold. Finally, a Sabbatian stronghold sprang up again in Prague, where Frankism was propagated in a Jewish form. After 1815, however, the movement fell apart and its members were absorbed into secular Jewish society, like the Frankist ancestors of Louis Brandeis.

It is now time to turn our attention to the actual content of the spiritualism of these Sabbatian groups, for although the details of their theosophical teachings cannot be understood by anyone not already familiar with the intricacies of Kabbalistic speculation in both the *Zohar* and the writings of the Lurianic school, other vital questions which concerned them, as well as their doctrine of the Godhead in its more general form, can be rendered intelligible even to those who are not fully versed in the esoteric side of Jewish mystical thought.

III

THE QUESTION which first confronted the "believers" after the apostasy of Sabbatai Zevi, and one to which they never ceased returning, was of the following order: since by all external tokens the redemption had already been at hand, and since the Messiah, the authenticity of whose mission was beyond doubt, had actually revealed himself to his people, why had he forsaken them and his religion, and why had the historical and political deliverance from bondage which was to have naturally accompanied the cosmic process of *tikkun* been delayed? To this a paradoxically compelling answer was quickly offered: the apostasy of the Messiah was itself a religious mystery of the most crucial importance! No less an authority than Maimonides himself, it was argued, had stated that the actual details of the redemptive process were not to be known in advance; and although the truth of the matter was that everything that had happened was fully alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, these allusions themselves could not be correctly understood until the events they foretold had come to pass. All might be found to have been predicted in the relevant prophecies and legends which Nathan of Gaza, and even more so Abraham Cardozo, now proceeded to expound in the form of a new doctrine to which Sabbatai Zevi himself apparently subscribed.

As long as the last divine sparks (*nitzotzot*) of holiness and good which fell at the time of Adam's primordial sin into the impure realm of the *kelipot* (the hylic forces of evil whose hold in the world is particularly strong among the Gentiles) have not been gathered back again to their source—so the explanation ran—the process of redemption is incomplete. It is therefore left to the Redeemer, the holiest of men, to accomplish what not even the most righteous souls in the past have been able to do: to descend through the gates of impurity into the realm of the *kelipot* and to rescue the divine sparks still imprisoned there. As soon as this task is performed the Kingdom of Evil will collapse of itself, for its existence is made possible only by the divine sparks in its midst. The Messiah is constrained to commit "strange acts" (*ma'asim zarim*; a concept hereafter to occupy a central place in Sabbatian theology), of which his apostasy is the most startling; all of these, however, are necessary for the fulfillment of his mission. In the formulation of Cardozo: "It is ordained that the King Messiah don

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the garments of a Marrano and so go unrecognized by his fellow Jews. In a word, it is ordained that he become a Marrano like me."

Before proceeding to take a closer look at this bold and heretical doctrine, one might well dwell for a moment on Cardozo's own words, which provide in my opinion an invaluable clue to the motivation behind it, as they do in fact to nearly every other feature of the Sabbatian movement as well. Underlying the novelty of Sabbatian thought more than anything else was the deeply paradoxical religious sensibility of the Marranos and their descendants, who constituted a large portion of Sephardic Jewry. Had it not been for the unique psychology of these re-converts to Judaism, the new theology would never have found the fertile ground to flourish in that it did. Regardless of what the actual backgrounds of its first disseminators may have been, the Sabbatian doctrine of the Messiah was perfectly tailored to the needs of the Marranic mentality. Indeed, we know for a fact that Abraham Cardozo, one of the movement's most successful proselytizers, was of definite Marrano origin—he was born in Spain in 1627—a particular which goes far to explain the remarkable zeal and sincerity with which he defended the new doctrine. Historians in our own day have pointed out at length the degree of contradiction, of duplicity and duality, which was involved in the religious consciousness of the Marranos. For these undercover Jews "to don the garments of a Marrano" was by no means an unjustifiable act; in its defense they were fond of citing the story of Queen Esther, as well as various other biblical fragments and verses. Formal apostasy had never been considered by them to represent an irreconcilable break with their mother faith. And now along came a religious metaphysic which exalted just such a form of life to the highest possible level by attributing it to the person of the Redeemer himself! Certainly all kinds of implications, which we shall deal with later on, were contained in this original idea. Let us examine it more closely.

To begin with, the new doctrine could no longer be harmonized with the traditional messianic folk-myth held to by the Jewish masses unless room could be found in the latter for such a "contradiction in terms" as the apostasy of the Redeemer. At first it was no doubt believed that the Messiah's descent into the realm of the *kelipot* was but an incidental aspect of his mission, "as happened to King David [when he sojourned] with Achish King of Gath," but it soon came to be realized that such an extraordinary event must occupy the center of any messianic schema, which if necessary would have to be rebuilt around it: if the Messiah's task indeed contained a tragic element, as was now being proposed, support for this belief would have to be found in the sources and attitudes of Jewish tradition. What now took place in Sabbatianism was similar to what happened in Christianity at the time of the apostles, the chief difference being the shifting of the tragic moment in the Messiah's destiny from his crucifixion to his apostasy, a change which rendered the paradox in question even more severe. And to this novel conception another was soon added, one which indeed had a basis in aggadic literature, but whose hidden implications had gone unnoticed as long as no pressing reality had existed to force its application outside of the domain of pure theory and imagination; this was the notion that the King Messiah was to give "a new Torah" and that the commandments of the Law (*mitzvot*) were to be abrogated in messianic times. Speculations of this nature could be found in various Midrashim and Aggadot, but possessed no particular authority and were easily challenged by means of other exegetical passages to the opposite effect, with the consequence that, in Jewish tradition, the entire question had hitherto been allowed to remain in abeyance. Even those visionaries who dreamt through the ages of a new Word of God in a redeemed world did not, in fact, particularly connect this idea with the activities of the Messiah himself, and it was not until it was seized upon by the new "Marranic" doctrine that its latent explosive power was revealed.

THE DOCTRINE of the necessary apostasy of the Messiah did not originate in the realm of literature, but was rather rooted in new religious feelings that had come to exist. It was only after the initial manifestation of these that the effort to justify them on the basis of authoritative sources began, and with truly remarkable results, for practically overnight a new religious language was born. From bits and pieces of Scripture, from scattered paradoxes and sayings in the writings of the Kabbalah, from all the remotest corners of Jewish religious literature, an unprecedented theology of Judaism was brought into being. The cynicism of most Jewish historians toward these "inanities" does not reveal any great understanding of what actually took place. Suddenly we find ourselves confronted by an original Jewish terminology, far removed from that of Christianity, yet equally determined to express the contradictions inherent in the life of the Redeemer and in redemption itself. Striking as it did a hidden wellspring of deep religious emotion, one can hardly deny that this gospel must have possessed a powerful attraction, nor that it often managed to inject new meanings into familiar phrases and figures of speech with a fascinating profundity. Such a dialectical eruption of new forces in the midst of old concepts is rare indeed. Because Graetz and other historians insisted on regarding its articulation as being nothing more than a pretext for a monstrous debauchment of moral and spiritual values, they completely overlooked its true significance. To be sure, the doctrine of an apostate Messiah did serve as a pretext

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too, but it was also a great deal more; and had it not appealed (and by virtue of its very paradoxicality!) to vital components in the spiritual make-up of the Jew, and above all to his sense of spiritual mission, it would never have succeeded in attracting a following in the first place. This missionary ideology reached a peak in the writings of the Lurianic Kabbalah, which strove to inculcate in every Jew a sense of duty to "elevate the sparks" and so help bring about the ultimate *tikkun* of the Creation.

Here the 53rd chapter of Isaiah played a key role, for as it was now reinterpreted the verse, "But he was wounded because of our transgressions" was taken to be an allusion not only to the Messiah ben Joseph, the legendary forerunner of the Redeemer who according to tradition was to suffer death at the hands of the Gentiles, but to the Messiah ben David as well, who "would be forcibly prevented from observing the Torah." By a play on words, the Hebrew *ve-hu mehola*l, "but he was wounded," was interpreted as meaning "from sacred he [the Messiah] will be made profane [*hol*]." Thus,

> all Gentiles are referred to as profane [*hol*] and *kelipah,* and whereas Israel alone is called sacred, all the other nations are profane. And even though a Jew commit a transgression, as long as he remains a Jew among Jews he is called sacred and an Israelite, for as the rabbis have said, "Even though he has sinned, he is still an Israelite." It follows that there is no way for the King Messiah to be made profane except he be removed from the Community of Israel into another domain.

Many similar homilies were written on the rest of the chapter, especially on the verse, "And he made his grave with the wicked." Yet another favorite verse was Deuteronomy 33:7 ("And this for Judah, and he said: Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people"), which was assumed to allude to the Davidic Messiah of the House of Judah, whose destiny it was to be taken from his people (hence Moses's prayer that God bring him back to them). Endless biblical verses were cited to prove that the Messiah was fated to be condemned as an outcast and criminal by his own people. Clothed in Messianic radiance, all the typical arguments of the Marranos were applied to Sabbatai Zevi:

> And similar to this [the apostasy of Sabbatai Zevi] is what happened to Esther, who was the cause of great salvation to Israel; for although most of the people, being ignorant, most certainly despised her for having given herself to an idol-worshiper and a Gentile in clear violation of the bidding of the Torah, the sages of old, who knew the secret [of her action], did not regard her as a sinner, for it is said of her in the Talmud: "Esther was the ground of the entire world."

In the same vein, the familiar aggadic saying that "the last Redeemer will be as the first" was taken to mean that just as Moses lived for many years at the court of Pharaoh, so the Messiah must live with "the Turk," for as the exile draws to a close the Messiah himself must be exiled to atone for Israel's sins.

NEXT CAME the turn of the *Zohar,* and here too, with the help of major or minor distortions, a world of new symbols was made to emerge, such as the figure of "the king who is good within but clothed in evil garments." In vain it was argued against this interpretation that the passage does not refer in this context to a king at all, much less to the Messiah; the image, so expressive in its obscurity, penetrated deep into the Sabbatian consciousness where it remained for generations to come. Two other writers whose works were mined in this fashion were Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel of Prague and Rabbi Joseph Taitatsak of Salonika, one of the emigrés from Spain in 1492: the former was found to have cryptically predicted that the Messiah would be bound to the world of Islam, while the latter was supposed to have stated, "when the rabbis said that the Son of David would not come until the kingdom was entirely given over to unbelief [*Sanhedrin* 97a], they were thinking of the Kingdom of Heaven, for the *Shekhinah* is destined to don the garments of Ishmael." In a word, the attempt to justify the belief that the fall and apostasy of the Messiah were necessary actions was carried out assiduously and successfully and led to the composition of many homilies, treatises, and books, some of which have not yet been recovered from their resting places. Endless vindications and defenses of the new doctrine were brought from practically every corner of Jewish literature. At first the tendency was to assert that although the Messiah's conversion had been forced upon him, it was qualitatively to be considered as a deliberate act; gradually, however, this motif disappeared, and the emphasis came to be placed squarely on the paradox that the Messiah should convert of his own free will. The descent into the *kelipot* was, indeed had to be, a voluntary one.

It was at this point that a radically new content was bestowed upon the old rabbinic concept of *mitzvah ha-ba'ah ba-averah,* literally, "a commandment which is fulfilled by means of a transgression." Once it could be claimed that the Messiah's apostasy was in no way a transgression, but was rather a fulfillment of the commandment of God, "for it is known throughout Israel that the prophets can do and command things which are not in accord with the Torah and its laws," the entire question of the continued validity of the Law had reached a critical stage. We know that even before his apostasy Sabbatai Zevi violated several of the commandments by eating the fat of animals and administering it to others, directing

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that the paschal sacrifice be performed outside of the Land of Israel, and cancelling the fast days. His followers soon began to seek explanations for these acts, and here began a division which was to lead eventually to an open split in the movement.

IV

THE NEW DOCTRINE of the necessary apostasy of the Messiah was accepted by all the "believers." In fact, it proved to be symbolically richer than was at first assumed, for it expertly expressed the contradiction between the outward reality of history and the inward reality of the "believers' " lives. It was now no longer to be wondered at that the outward deliverance had been delayed, for this could be explained by the mystic principle of "good within but clothed in evil garments." In turn, however, other questions arose which the doctrine of necessary apostasy was in itself insufficient to answer.

First of all, it was asked, what was the nature of the Messiah's act? Was it intended to be an exemplar for others? Were all Jews enjoined to follow suit? Or was it essentially inimitable and to be looked upon as a theoretical model only?

Second, what was the nature of the transitional period during which the Messiah was in the clutches of the *kelipot*? Could it properly be called the redemption or not? Since it was agreed by all that the *Shekhinah* had "risen from the dust," where was the *Shekhinah* now? Did it still make sense to speak of her "exile" and to mourn for her? What exactly was the relationship of inwardness to outwardness in the present age?

Third, what was the status of the Torah during this period? Had a new aspect of it been revealed? How was the principle of *mitzvah ha-ba'ah ba-averah* to be understood? Could it not be argued that the change which had taken place in the relationship of the divine worlds necessitated a corresponding change in the performance of the commandments, the purpose of which had been to restore the harmony of the old, unredeemed cosmos that had been shattered by the primordial sin? Was not the Lurianic Kabbalah in its traditional form now outdated?

These were the principal dilemmas which were to shape the development of Sabbatianism in the course of the following hundred years, and in several countries to transform it from a messianic movement into a nihilistic movement operating within a religious framework. And just as these questions were themselves mutually related, so the nihilism which resulted from them was to be characterized by its internal unity and consistency.

Here, then, it is necessary to distinguish between two opposing Sabbatian factions which emerged from the clashes of opinion surrounding these disputed points, as well as from differing interpretations of the theosophical "mystery of the Godhead" (*sod ha-elohut*) revealed by Sabbatai Zevi to his disciples: a moderate and rather piously inclined wing of the movement on the one hand, and a radical, antinomian, and nihilistic wing on the other. (Both of these factions, in turn, contained many subdivisions, but here we are concerned only with the more general features of each.) In the case of some Sabbatians, who have left us no completely candid record of their feelings, it is difficult to determine to which of these two camps they belonged.* As might naturally be expected, in face of the persecutions against them the "believers" were not often in a position to expound their beliefs undisguisedly, and certainly not to permit them to appear in print. This was particularly true of the nihilists, who had good and compelling reasons for concealing their doctrines.

Moderate Sabbatianism, which we shall consider first, was a view shared by many rabbis and was represented by men like Nathan of Gaza, Abraham Cardozo, and Abraham Rovigo. Of these three, Cardozo and Rovigo are the more valuable sources, especially the former, a large number of whose many treatises have survived thanks to the refusal of his disciples in London, Turkey, and Morocco to burn them in compliance with the injunctions of the rabbinical courts.

According to the "moderates," the apostasy of the Messiah was not intended to serve as an example for others. To be sure, Sabbatai Zevi had done what was necessary, but to attempt to follow in his footsteps was to belie the significance of his act, which was performed in behalf of everybody. In the words of Isaiah 53: "The Lord hath made to light on him the iniquity of us all." Strictly speaking, "all were [originally] under the obligation to convert," but God in His mercy permitted the apostasy of the Messiah to atone for the sins of His people. Besides being strange and scandalous in its nature, Sabbatai Zevi's conversion was in a class by itself and was not an object of imitation. The Jew was expected to remain a Jew. True, a new world-era had undoubtedly been ushered in, the spiritual worlds had undergone *tikkun*, and their structure was now permanently altered; nonetheless, as long as the redemption did not manifest itself outwardly in the realm of objective events in history, as long as the external bondage continued and the phenomenal world remained unchanged, no aspect or commandment of the Torah was to be openly tampered with except for the small number of inno-

* One might particularly cite in this connection the puzzling case of the great Talmudic scholar Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschütz, a psychological enigma that still needs badly to be unraveled, although here is not the place to do so. I cannot conceal the fact, however, that after thoroughly examining both Eibeschütz's own Kabbalistic writings and all the polemical works that they engendered I have been forced to conclude that he was indeed a Sabbatian, as both Jacob Emden and, in a later age, Heinrich Graetz insisted.

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vations, such as the cancellation of the fast of *Tish'ah be-Av* (the day of the destruction of the Temple), which had been proclaimed by the Messiah and his prophets as symbolic tokens of the redemption's commencement. Even on this point, however, there was disagreement, for several Sabbatians, including Abraham Rovigo himself, decided to reinstate the fast after a period of hesitation lasting a number of years during which they had disregarded it—not because they had "gone back" on their beliefs, but because of the questionable nature of the practice itself, as witnessed by the fact that Rovigo's disciple, Mordecai Ashkenazi, had been bidden by a *maggid* or "spiritual intelligence" to desist from it. On the whole, it was the view of the "moderates" that during the transitional period under way the *kelipot* still retained a good deal of their power, which could only be eliminated by continued performance of the *mitzvot*: the "façade" of rabbinic Judaism must be allowed to remain temporarily standing, although great changes had already taken place within the edifice. One unmistakable testimony to this inner transformation was the abandonment by many of the "moderates" of the mystical meditations (*kavvanot*) of Isaac Luria. The first to discontinue their use was Nathan of Gaza, whose reasons for doing so were as follows:

The *kavvanot* of the Lurianic Kabbalists were inward actions of thought designed to relate the performance of given commandments or prayers to specific stages in the dynamic chain of the divine worlds and thereby to reintegrate the latter by helping to restore them to the places they had occupied before their catastrophic fall. Thus, each *kavvanah* was a spiritual act demonstrating that the outward undertaking which occasioned it harmonized invisibly with the overall structure of the cosmos. Now, however, with the advent of the Messiah, this structure had changed. The sense of inner freedom possessed by the "believers" was not a subjective illusion, but was caused by a real reorganization of the worlds illuminating the soul, as a result of which the Lurianic *kavvanot* had become obsolete. This in turn led to a revaluation of the entire Lurianic Kabbalah, and on occasion both Nathan of Gaza and Abraham Cardozo went so far as to direct veiled criticisms at Isaac Luria himself. Nathan, for example, writes: "In the present age it is no longer in order to read the *tikkunim* composed by Rabbi Isaac Luria of blessed memory and his disciples, nor to meditate according to their *kavvanot,* for the times have changed. The *kavvanot* of Rabbi Isaac Luria were meant for his own age, which was [like] an ordinary day of the week, whereas now it is the eve of the Sabbath, and it is not proper to treat the Sabbath as though it were a weekday." Elsewhere he writes: "My meaning is that the *kavvanot* discovered by our teacher Rabbi Isaac Luria, may his saintly and righteous memory be blessed, are no longer appropriate to our own time, because the raising up [of the divine worlds] has entered a new phase, so that it would be like employing *kavvanot* intended for a weekday on the Sabbath. Therefore, let everyone beware of using them, and likewise let none of the *kavvanot* or homilies or writings of Rabbi Isaac Luria be read henceforward, for they are abstruse and no living man has understood them except Rabbi Hayyim Vital, who was a disciple of the master [Isaac Luria] for several years, at the end of which he surpassed him in knowledge."

In a similar vein: "It is no longer in order to perform the midnight vigil, that is, to weep and mourn for the exile of the *Shekhinah,* for she has already begun to rise from the earth, so that whoever mourns for her is a blunderer and attracts the company of that guilty [demon] Lilith, since it is she now who weeps and wails." Many other passages like these could be cited. As a matter of course Cardozo hastened to compose a new series of updated *kavvanot,* but these were never to prove popular with his fellow Sabbatians, who either gave up the practice of mystical meditations entirely, or else, like many of the Hasidim who came after them, took to composing their own as they individually saw fit.

It was generally held by all the Sabbatians that now, on the "eve of the Sabbath," the mystery of the Godhead that had eluded the rabbis, philosophers, and Kabbalists throughout the ages was finally to be revealed. This was not to say that the secret had not been hinted at by the last of the Gnostics living in the Tannaitic period, who cryptically concealed it in the pages of the *Zohar* and in several Aggadot, particularly those known as the *aggadot shel dofi* or "offensive Aggadot," which had served as milestones for the contemplation of the mystics and as obscure hints at the mysteries during the dark night of exile. But the true meaning of these had been overlooked; nor could it be fully comprehended until the End of Days. On the other hand, although the "mystery of the Godhead" was yet to be revealed in its entirety, a part of it had now been made known. Here again a rejection of Lurianism and the substitution of a new Sabbatian Kabbalah in its place were involved. The first written exposition of the new system, which was to be subject to a great many different inferences and interpretations, was the small tract *Raza de-Mehemanuta* ("The Secret of the Faith") which was orally dictated by Sabbatai Zevi to a disciple after his apostasy. Its effect was to prefix yet another stage to the theogonic speculations of the Kabbalists, for it treated (and quite remarkably) of the mysterious inner life of the Godhead before its *tzimtzum* or primordial contraction, whereas Lurianic Kabbalah had dealt only with the counter-expansion of the deity once the *tzimtzum* had taken place.

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We have already seen in connection with their doctrine of the apostate Messiah that the Sabbatians were not in the least bit chary of paradoxes, and indeed, their theological reflections on the true nature of "the Faith" and its history in Israel reveal a dialectical daring that cannot but be respected. Here we are given our deepest glimpse yet into the souls of these revolutionaries who regarded themselves as loyal Jews while at the same time completely overturning the traditional religious categories of Judaism. I am not of course speaking of a feeling of "loyalty" to the Jewish religion as it was defined by rabbinical authority. For many, if not for most Sabbatians, the Judaism of the rabbis, which they identified with the Judaism of the exile, had come to assume an entirely dubious character. Even when they continued to live within its jurisdiction it was not out of any sense of positive commitment; no doubt it had been suited to its time, but in the light of the soul-shaking truth of the redemption that time had passed. Taking into account all that has been said here, it is hardly surprising that this attitude should have existed. What is surprising, however, indeed astoundingly so, is the nature of the spiritual world that the Sabbatians should have stumbled upon in the course of their search through the Bible for "the mystery of the Godhead" which exilic Judaism had allowed to perish, for here we are confronted with nothing less than the totally unexpected revival of the religious beliefs of the ancient Gnostics, albeit in a transvalued form.

THE GNOSTICS, who were the contemporaries of the Jewish Tannaim of the 2nd century, believed that it was necessary to distinguish between a good but hidden God who alone was worthy of being worshiped by the elect, and a Demiurge or creator of the physical universe, whom they identified with the "just" God of the Old Testament. In effect they did not so much reject the Jewish Scriptures, whose account of events they conceded to be at least partly true, as they denied the superiority of the Jewish God, for whom they reserved the most pejorative terms. Salvation was brought to mankind by messengers sent by the hidden God to rescue the soul from the cruel law or "justice" of the Demiurge, whose dominion over the evil material world, as testified to by the Bible, was but an indication of his lowly status. The hidden God Himself was unknown, but He had entrusted Jesus and the gnostic faithful with the task of overthrowing the "God of the Jews." As for the claim of both Jews and orthodox Christians that the God of Israel who created the world and the transcendent God of goodness were one and the same, this was a great falsehood which stood in the way of true gnosis. This kind of "metaphysical anti-Semitism," as is well known, did not vanish from history with the disappearance of the gnostic sects, but continued to reassert itself within the Catholic Church and its heretical offshoots throughout the Middle Ages.

"The mystery of the Godhead" which Sabbatianism now "discovered," and which it believed to be identical with "the mystery of the God of Israel" and "the faith of Father Abraham," was founded entirely on a new formulation of this ancient gnostic paradox. In the version made current by Cardozo it was expounded as follows:

All nations and philosophers have been led by irrefutable laws of the intellect to acknowledge the existence of a First Cause responsible for setting all else in motion. Given the fact, therefore, that anyone capable of logical reasoning can demonstrate to his own satisfaction that such a Cause exists, what need is there for it to be specially revealed to mankind? What possible religious difference can such a revelation make when we are no less the wiser without it? The answer is, none at all. The First Cause, which was worshiped by Pharaoh and Nimrod and the wise men of India alike, is not the concern of religion at all, for it has nothing to do with the affairs of this world or its creation and exerts no influence on it for good or for bad. The purpose of a divine revelation must be to make something known which cannot be grasped by the intellect on its own, something which has specifically religious value and content. And indeed, this is precisely the case with the Jewish Torah, which does not dwell at all on that Hidden Principle whose existence can be adequately proven by the intellect, but speaks only of the God of Israel, *Elohei Yisrael*, who is the creator of the world and the first emanation to proceed from the First Cause. This God, in turn, has two aspects, or "countenances" (*partzufim*), one male and one female, the latter being known as the *Shekhinah*; He alone it is who creates and reveals Himself and redeems, and to Him alone are prayer and worship to be rendered. It is this paradox of a God of religion who is distinct from the First Cause that is the essence of true Judaism, that "faith of our fathers" which is concealed in the books of the Bible and in the dark sayings of Aggadot and the Kabbalah. In the course of the confusion and demoralization brought on by the exile this mystery (of which even Christianity was nothing but a distorted expression) was forgotten and the Jewish People was mistakenly led to identify the impersonal First Cause with the personal God of the Bible, a spiritual disaster for which Saadia Gaon, Maimonides, and the other philosophers will yet be held accountable. It was thus that the words of the prophet Hosea, "For the Children of Israel shall sit solitary many days without a king" (3:4), came to be fulfilled. At the exile's end, however, Israel's God will reveal Himself once more, and this secret is a source of precious comfort to the "believers."

Here we have a typically gnostic scheme, only

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inverted: the good God is no longer the *deus absconditus,* who has now become the deity of the philosophers for whom there is no room in religion proper, but rather the God of Israel who created the world and presented it with His Torah. What daring labyrinths of the spirit are revealed in this new creed! What yearnings for a regeneration of faith and what disdainful negation of the exile! Like true spiritual revolutionaries, with an unfeigned enthusiasm which even today cannot fail to impress the reader of Cardozo's books, the "believers" unflinchingly proclaimed their belief that all during the exile the Jewish people had worshiped a powerless divinity and had clung to a way of life that was fundamentally in need of reform. When one considers how wildly extravagant all this may appear even now, it is easy enough to appreciate the wrath and indignation with which such a theology was greeted by the Orthodox camp in its own day. Determined to avoid a full-scale revolution within the heart of Jewry, the rabbinical traditionalists and their supporters did all they could to drive the "believers" beyond the pale. And yet in spite of all this, one can hardly deny that a great deal that is authentically Jewish was embodied in these paradoxical individuals too, in their desire to start afresh and in their realization of the fact that negating the exile meant negating its religious and institutional forms as well and returning to the original fountainheads of the Jewish faith. This last practice—a tendency to rely in matters of belief upon the Bible and the Aggadah—grew to be particularly strong among the nihilists in the movement. Here, too, faith in paradox reigned supreme: the stranger the Aggadah, the more offensive to reason and common sense, the more likely it was to be seized upon as a symbol of that "mystery of faith" which naturally tended to conceal itself in the most frightful and fanciful tales.

I HAVE alluded to the fierce discussions that broke out among the Sabbatians over the issue of how "the mystery of the Godhead" was to be interpreted. Several of the elucidations of the doctrine that are known to us differ substantially from the version given by Cardozo, who devoted his very best speculative powers to the question. All of these treatises employ the terminology of the *Zohar* and the Lurianic Kabbalah, but proceed to attribute to them meanings that are entirely their own. Among the speculations on the subject that have come down to us in detail are those of Nehemiah Hayon, Samuel Primo, and Jonathan Eibeschütz. Despite their division of the Godhead into three hypostases (*partzufim*)—the First Cause or "Holy Ancient One" (*atika kadisha*), the God of Israel or "Holy King" (*malka kadisha*), and the *Shekhinah*—all of these writers sought to uphold the essential dynamic unity of the divinity. The central problems as they saw them—problems, be it said, which did not exist for non-Sabbatian Kabbalah at all—were first of all to determine the nature of the relationship, the "three knots of faith" as they called it, between the First Cause, the God of Israel, and the *Shekhinah,* and secondly to establish the exact content of the new revelation concerning the essence of the God of Israel. Characteristic of the approach of these Sabbatian "moderates" was their stubborn refusal to leave any room in their gnostic theories for a doctrine of divine incarnation. Indeed, the literature of "moderate" Sabbatianism is in general filled with violent denunciations of Christianity and of the Christian dogma of the Trinity.

According to several of the "moderates," "the mystery of the Godhead" had not yet been fully revealed: during the original messianic revival period of 1665-66, they argued, there had been an initial revelation which it was permitted to make known freely, but now, during the period of transition, eclipse, and uncertainty, the situation was no longer the same. The *Shekhinah* had indeed "begun to rise," but "she has still not returned to her place entirely, for had she returned we would no longer be in exile." These words were written by Abraham Rovigo more than thirty years after Sabbatai Zevi's apostasy, of the mystic meaning of which he had absolutely no doubt, and they illustrate in a nutshell the psychology of "moderate" Sabbatianism while at the same time solving the riddle of how so many rabbis who were confirmed "believers" nevertheless managed to remain in their rabbinical posts. The redemption had truly begun, but it was a gradual process: "[It proceeds] step by step. In the End the Holy One, blessed be He, will raise her from the dust." This was not to say that the *Shekhinah* had not already begun to rise of her own accord, but "as long as He does not lift her up Himself it is said that she is still in exile." It goes without saying that those who subscribed to this view were obliged to keep up all the traditional practices of exilic, i.e., historic, Judaism. Even the midnight vigil for the *Shekhinah* was ultimately reintroduced.

In a word, at the same time that it was completely transforming the historic inner world of Judaism in its own unique manner, "moderate" Sabbatianism continued to adhere to traditional Jewish observance not for the sake of mere camouflage, but as a matter of principle. The inward crisis which every "moderate" underwent was permitted little or no outward expression, and inasmuch as such an objectification of his feelings was barred by either the exigencies of the situation or the compunctions of his own religious consciousness, he was forced to retreat even further into himself. But although the new sense of inner freedom bore purely inner consequences, we can nevertheless rely on the judgment of those anti-Sabbatian polemicists who saw

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perfectly clearly that the inward devastation of old values was no less dangerous or far-reaching than its outward manifestation. Whoever reads such a volume as Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschütz's *The Book of the Eternal Name,* a treatise on "the mystery of the Godhead" composed in the traditional style of Talmudic dialectics, will readily see what abysses had opened up in the very heart of Judaism. From these were to come the deluge: pure founts of salvation and spiritual rebirth to the one camp, gross waters of corruption and shameless sacrilege to the other.

V

WE HAVE SEEN how the principal feature of "moderate" Sabbatian doctrine was the belief that the apostasy of the Messiah was *sui generis.* The Messiah must go his lonely way into the kingdom of impurity and "the other side" (*sitra ahra*) and dwell there in the realm of a "strange god" whom he would yet refuse to worship. The enormous tension between the subjective and the objective which had developed in the ranks of his followers had so far found a legitimate expression in this one act alone. Whereas Sabbatai Zevi had actually done strange and objectionable things in the name of the holy, the celebration of this paradox among the "believers" was restricted to the domain of faith. "Moderate" Sabbatianism drew a circle around the concept of "strange holiness" and forbade itself to enter: it was indeed the Messiah's fate to scandalize Israel by his deeds, but it was decidedly his fate alone.

Once drawn, however, the line was clearly difficult to maintain. The more ardent "believer" found himself becoming increasingly restive. Was he to abandon the Messiah entirely just when the latter was engaged in the most bitter phase of his struggle with the power of evil? If the spark of the redemption had been experienced by all, why should not all do as the Redeemer? How could one refuse to go to his aid? And soon the cry was heard: Let us surrender ourselves as he did! Let us descend together to the abyss before it shuts again! Let us cram the maw of impurity with the power of holiness until it bursts from within.

Feelings such as these formed the psychological background for the great nihilistic conflagration that was to break out in the "radical" wing of the Sabbatian movement. The fire was fed by powerful religious emotions, but in the crucial moment these were to join forces with passions of an entirely different sort, namely, with the instincts of anarchy and lawlessness that lie deeply buried in every human soul. Traditionally Judaism had always sought to suppress such impulses, but now that they were allowed to emerge in the revolutionary exhilaration brought on by the experience of redemption and its freedom, they burst forth more violently than ever. An aura of holiness seemed to surround them. They too would be granted their *tikkun,* if only in the "hindparts of holiness."

Ultimately, too, the disappointing course of external events had a telling effect. Though he possessed the heroic soul of the warrior Bar Kokhba, Sabbatai Zevi had not gone forth to do battle on the Day of the Lord. A yawning chasm had appeared between inner and outer realities, and once it was decided that the former was the truer of the two, it was only to be expected that the value of the latter would increasingly come to be rejected. It was precisely at this point that messianism was transformed into nihilism. Having been denied the political and historical outlets it had originally anticipated, the new sense of freedom now sought to express itself in the sphere of human morality. The psychology of the "radical" Sabbatians was utterly paradoxical and "Marranic." Essentially its guiding principle was: Whoever is as he appears to be cannot be a true "believer." In practice this meant the following:

The "true faith" cannot be a faith which men publicly profess. On the contrary, the "true faith" must always be concealed. In fact, it is one's duty to deny it outwardly, for it is like a seed that has been planted in the bed of the soul and it cannot grow unless it is first covered over. For this reason every Jew is obliged to become a Marrano.

Again: a "true act" cannot be an act committed publicly, before the eyes of the world. Like the "true faith," the "true act" is concealed, for only through concealment can it negate the falsehood of what is explicit. Through a revolution of values, what was formerly sacred has become profane and what was formerly profane has become sacred. It is no longer enough to invent new mystical meditations (*kavvanot*) to suit the changed times. New forms of action are needed. Prior to the advent of the Redeemer the inward and the outward were in harmony, and this is why it was possible to effect great *tikkunim* by means of outwardly performing the commandments. Now that the Redeemer has arrived, however, the two spheres are in opposition: the inward commandment, which alone can effect a *tikkun,* has become synonymous with the outward transgression. *Bittulah shel torah zehu kiyyumah*: the violation of the Torah is now its true fulfillment.

More than anything else, it was this insistence of the "radicals" on the potential holiness of sin—a belief which they attempted to justify by citing out of context the Talmudic dictum (*Nazir* 23b), "A transgression committed for its own sake is greater than a commandment not committed for its own sake"—which alienated and offended the average Jew and caused even the "believers" themselves to undergo the severest of conflicts.

In the history of religion, whenever we come across the doctrine of the holiness of sin it is always in conjunction with one or another spiritualistic sect. The type of the pneumatic, which I

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have previously discussed, is particularly susceptible to such a teaching and it is hardly necessary to point out the connections that exist between the theories of nihilism and those of the more extravagant forms of spiritualism. To the pneumatic, the spiritual universe which he inhabits is of an entirely different order from the world of ordinary flesh and blood, whose opinion of the new laws he has chosen to live by is therefore irrelevant; insofar as he is above sin (an idea, common to many sectarian groups, which occasionally occurs in the literature of Hasidism as well) he may do as the spirit dictates without needing to take into account the moral standards of the society around him. Indeed he is, if anything, duty-bound to violate and subvert this "ordinary" morality in the name of the higher principles that have been revealed to him.

ALTHOUGH INDIVIDUALS with inclinations in this direction existed in Judaism also, particularly among the Kabbalists, up to the time of the Sabbatians their activities were confined entirely to the level of pure theory. The most outstanding example of such speculative or virtual "spiritualism" to be found in Kabbalistic literature is the *Sefer ha-Temunah* ("The Book of the Image"), a mystical treatise written in early 13th-century Spain, in which it is stated that the Torah consists of a body of spiritual letters which, though they remain essentially unchanged, present different appearances to the reader in different cosmic aeons (*shemitot*). In effect, therefore, each aeon, or *shemitah*, possesses a Torah of its own. In the current *shemitah*, which is ruled by the divine quality of *din*, stern judgment or rigor, the Torah is read in terms of prohibitions and commandments and even its most mystic allusions must be interpreted in this light. In the coming aeon, however, which will be that of *rahamim*, divine mercy, the Torah will be read differently, so that in all probability "what is prohibited now will be permitted then." Everything depends on the particular aeon and the divine quality (or attribute) presiding over it. Sensing the dangers inherent in such a doctrine, certain Kabbalists, such as Moses Cordovero, attempted to dismiss it as entirely unworthy of consideration. But it was precisely those works that propounded it, such as the *Sefer ha-Temunah* and the *Sefer ha-Kanah*, which influenced the Sabbatians tremendously.

To the theory of the cosmic aeons the Sabbatians assimilated a second, originally unrelated concept. The *Zohar* itself does not recognize or, more exactly, does not utilize the idea of the *shemitot* at all (a fact that was instrumental in making it suspect in the eyes of later Kabbalists), but in two later additions to the Zoharic corpus, the *Tikkunei ha-Zohar* and the *Ra'ya Mehemna*, a great deal is said on the subject of four emanated worlds, the World of *atzilut* or "Emanation," the World of *beriah* or "Creation," the World of *yetzirah* or "Formation," and the World of *asiyah* or "Making," which together comprise the different levels of spiritual reality. In connection with these we also occasionally hear of a "Torah of *atzilut*" and a "Torah of *beriah*," the meanings of which are not entirely clear. By the time of the Kabbalists of the School of Safed, however, we find these latter terms employed in a definite sense to indicate that there are two aspects of the one essential Torah, i.e., the Torah as it is understood in the supernal World of *atzilut* and the Torah as it is understood in the lower World of *beriah*. What the Sabbatians now did was to seize this idea and expound it in the light of the theory of cosmic aeons. The Torah of *beriah*, they argued, borrowing a metaphor from the *Zohar* (I, 23) is the Torah of the unredeemed world of exile, whose purpose it was to serve as a garment for the *Shekhinah* in her exile, so that whoever observed its commandments and prohibitions was like one who helped clothe the *Shekhinah* in her state of distress. The Torah of *atzilut*, on the other hand, is the "true" Torah which, like "the mystery of the Godhead" it makes manifest, has been in a state of concealment for the entire period of the exile. Now that the redemption has commenced it is about to be revealed, and although in essence it is identical with the Torah of *beriah*, its way of being read will be different; thus, all the commandments and prohibitions of the Torah of *beriah* will now be reinterpreted by the light of the World of *atzilut*, in which (to take but one example), as is stated in several Kabbalistic sources, there is no such thing as forbidden sexual practices. It was in this manner that assertions made in a completely different spirit and in terms of a wholly different understanding of the concepts "World of *atzilut*" and "Torah of *atzilut*" were pressed into service by the "radical" Sabbatians as slogans for their new morality.*

* Among anti-Sabbatian Kabbalists there were a number of attempts to explain this monstrous perversion, as it seemed, of sacred writings. In his *Divrei Sofrim* ([1913], p. 32d), for example, R. Zadok Hacohen of Lublin cites an unidentified "book written by a saintly man" as his authority for asserting that the Sabbatians "came to the end that they came to because they engaged in the study of the Kabbalah with their hearts full of lust and therefore materialized much [of its spiritual meaning]; and in consequence of the fact that they saw references to copulation, kissing, embracing, and so forth [in what they read], they yielded to lascivious passions, may God preserve us from the same, and committed great evil." In much the same vein, Rabbi Zevi of Zydaczow, one of the great Kabbalists of the Hasidic movement and possibly none other than Rabbi Zadok Hacohen's "saintly man" himself, writes in his *Sur me-Ra va-Aseh Tov:* "I once heard my teacher [the Seer of Lublin] comment on certain students by mentioning the case of that well-known sect. . . . It [i.e., Sabbatian antinomianism] happened because they desired to achieve the revelation of Elijah and to prophesy by the Holy Spirit . . . without troubling to discipline their nature or their material selves. . . ."

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The concept of the two Torahs was an extremely important one for Sabbatian nihilism, not least because it corresponded so perfectly to the "Marranic" mentality. In accordance with its purely mystical nature the Torah of *atzilut* was to be observed strictly in secret; the Torah of *beriah*, on the other hand, was to be actively and deliberately violated. As to how this was to be done, however, the "radicals" could not agree and differing schools of thought evolved among them. It is important to keep in mind that we are dealing here with an eruption of the most diverse sorts of emotion. The Gordian knot binding the soul of the exilic Jew had been cut and a vertigo that ultimately was to be his undoing seized the newly liberated individual: genuine desires for a reconsecration of life mingled indiscriminately with all kinds of destructive and libidinal forces tossed up from the depths by an irrepressible groundswell that undulated wildly between the earthly and the divine.

The psychological factors at work were particularly various in regard to the doctrine of the holiness of sin, which though restricted at first by some of the "believers" to the performance of certain specified acts alone, tended by virtue of its own inner logic to embrace more and more of the Mosaic Law, especially the biblical prohibitions. Among the leaders of the Dönmeh the antinomian blessing composed by Sabbatai Zevi, "Blessed art Thou O Lord our God, King of the universe, who permittest the forbidden [*mattir isurim*],"* became a byword. In fact, two somewhat contradictory rationalizations of antinomian behavior existed side by side. On the one hand there were those who said: in the world of redemption there can be no such thing as sin, therefore all is holy and everything is permitted. To this it was retorted: not at all! what is needed rather is totally to deny the *beriah*, "Creation" (a word that had by now come to denote every aspect of the old life and its institutions), to trample its values underfoot, for only by casting off the last vestiges of these can we truly become free. To state the matter in Kabbalistic terms, the one side proposed to withhold the sparks of holiness from the *kelipot* until they perished from lack of nourishment, whereas the other insisted that the *kelipot* be positively filled with holiness until they disintegrated from the pressure. But in either case, and despite the many psychological nuances which entered into the "transgression committed for its own sake" and the sacred sin, all the "radicals" were united in their belief in the sanctifying power of sin itself "that dwelleth with them in the midst of their uncleannesses," as they interpreted the phrase in Leviticus 16:6.

*A pun on the blessing in the morning prayer, "Blessed art Thou O Lord our God, King of the universe, who freest those who are in bondage [*mattir asurim*]." [Translator's note]

IT WOULD BE pointless to deny that the sexual element in this outburst was very strong: a primitive abandon such as the Jewish people would scarcely have thought itself capable of after so many centuries of discipline in the Law joined hands with perversely pathological drives to seek a common ideological rehabilitation. In the light of what happened there is little to wonder at when we read in the texts of rabbinical excommunications dating from the 18th century that the children of the "believers" were automatically to be considered bastards, just as it is perfectly understandable that these children and grandchildren themselves should have done everything in their power to obscure the history of their descent. One may readily grant, of course, as Zalman Rubashov justly observes in his study of the Frankists, that "every sectarian movement is suspected by the church against which it rebels of the most infamous misconduct and immorality," a conclusion which has led to the hypothesis that such accusations invariably tell us more about the depraved fantasies of the accusers than they do about the actual behavior of the accused. It is Rubashov's opinion, indeed, that although the conduct of the Frankists was "in itself adequate cause for indignation and amazement," there is also "every reason to assume that as a matter of course it was greatly exaggerated." As valid as the general rule may be, however, the plain facts of the matter are that in the case of the "radical" Sabbatians there was hardly any need for exaggeration. As Nahum Sokolow has pointed out in a note to Kraushar's history of Frankism, no matter how thoroughly fantastic and partisan the allegations of the anti-Sabbatians may seem to us, we have not the slightest justification for doubting their accuracy, inasmuch as in every case we can rely for evidence on the "confessions" of the "believers" themselves, as well as on a number of their apologias which have come down to us in both theoretical and homiletical form.

All this has recently been confirmed by an unexpected discovery. For many years—well into the present age, in fact—the Sabbatians in Salonika, the Dönmeh, regularly held a celebration on the twenty-second day of the Hebrew month of Adar known as "the Festival of the Lamb," the exact nature of which was kept a carefully guarded secret until some of the younger members of the sect were finally prevailed upon to reveal it to outsiders. According to their account the festival included an orgiastic rite called "the extinguishing of the lights." From what we know of this rite it probably came to Salonika from Izmir, for both its name and its contents were evidently borrowed from the pagan cult of "the Great Mother" which flourished in antiquity and continued to be practiced after its general demise by a small sect of "Light Extinguishers" in Asia Minor under the cover of Islam. There can be no

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question that the Dönmeh took over this ancient bacchanalia based on immemorial myths and adapted it to conform to their mystical belief in the sacramental value of exchanging wives, a custom that was undoubtedly observed by other "radicals" in the movement as well.

The history of Sabbatian nihilism as a mass movement rather than as the concern of a few isolated Jewish scholars who "donned the fez" like Sabbatai Zevi, began in 1683, when several hundred Jewish families in Salonika converted to Islam "so as to conquer the *kelipah* from within." From this point on organized Sabbatian nihilism appeared in four main forms:

1) That of the "believers" who chose "voluntary Marranism" in the form of Islam. The research that has been done on the subject of the Dönmeh, particularly the studies of Abraham Danon and Solomon Rosanes, definitely establishes that the sect was purely Jewish in its internal character, not, of course, in the accepted rabbinical sense, but rather in the sense of a mystical heresy. The apostasy of the Dönmeh aroused violent opposition among the "moderates," for reasons which I have already made clear.

2) That of the "believers" who remained traditional Jews in outward life while inwardly adhering to the "Torah of *atzilut*." Several groups of such individuals existed in the Balkans and Palestine (beginning with the arrival there of Hayyim Malakh), and afterward, in the 18th century, in Northern and Eastern Europe, where they were concentrated particularly in Podolia and in such nearby towns as Buczacz, Busk, Gliniany, Horodenka, Zhólkiew, Zloczow, Tysmenieca, Nadworna, Podhaice, Rohatyn, and Satanow, but also in other countries, especially Rumania, Hungary, and Moravia.

3) That of the Frankists who "Marranized themselves" by converting to Catholicism.

4) That of the Frankists in Bohemia, Moravia, Hungary, and Rumania, who chose to remain Jewish.

Despite the differences among these groups, all of them were part of a single larger entity. Inasmuch as it was believed by all the "radicals" that externals were no indication of true faith, apostasy was not a factor to come between them. A Jew in the ghetto of Prague, for example, who went on publicly observing the commandments of the "Torah of *beriah*" while at the same time violating them in private, knew perfectly well that the "believer" in Warsaw or, say, Offenbach who had recently been baptized "for mystical reasons" was still his brother, just as fifty years earlier Sabbatians in Northern Europe had continued to remain in close touch with the Dönmeh in Salonika even after their conversion to Islam. Essentially, the "radicals" all inhabited the same intellectual world. Their attitudes toward the Torah, the Messiah, and "the mystery of the Godhead" were identical, for all that they assumed new and unusual forms among the Frankists.

VI

THE SYSTEMATIC violation of the Torah of *beriah* was considered by the "radical" Sabbatians to be the principal attestation of the new epoch ushered in by Sabbatai Zevi. But exactly how was one to distinguish between what belonged to the lower World of *beriah* and its Torah, and what belonged to the higher World of *atzilut* and its Torah? Here opinion was divided. Baruchya Russo, better known as Berahya or Berochia, the leader of the radical wing of the Dönmeh in the beginning of the 18th century, preached to his followers that even the thirty-six transgressions deemed worthy by the Torah of the ultimate punishment of *karet*, i.e., being "cut off" from Israel and from God (a category that included all the forbidden sexual practices), were aspects of the Torah of *beriah* only. By the same token it was decreed permissible to eat of the sinew of the thigh-vein, for with the advent of the Messiah "Jacob's thigh has been restored."* In the opinion of some, who based their argument on a passage from the *Zohar*, refraining from the sinew of the thigh-vein and fasting on *Tish'ah be-Av* were mutually connected observances: "As long as it is forbidden to eat on *Tish'ah be-Av* it is forbidden to eat the sinew of the thigh-vein, and when it is permitted to eat on *Tish'ah be-Av* it is permitted to eat the sinew of the thigh-vein." Others went still further: "It is widely known that belonging to these sects are those who believe that [with the advent of the Messiah] the Torah has been nullified [*betelah*] and that in the future it will be [read] without [reference to] the commandments, for they say that the violation of the Torah has become its fulfillment, which they illustrate by the example of a grain of wheat that rots in the earth." In other words, just as a grain of wheat must rot in the earth before it can sprout, so the deeds of the "believers" must be truly "rotten" before they can germinate the redemption. This metaphor, which appears to have been extremely popular, conveys the whole of sectarian Sabbatian psychology in a nutshell: in the period of transition, while the redemption is still in a state of concealment, the Torah in its explicit form must be denied, for only thus can it too become "concealed" and ultimately renewed.

There were, however, even more extreme cases than these. Jacob Emden relates how he was told

* The prohibition against eating the sinew of the thigh-vein is to be found in Genesis 32, which tells of Jacob's wrestling with the angel: "Therefore the children of Israel eat not the sinew of the thigh-vein which is upon the hollow of the thigh unto this day; because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, even in the sinew of the thigh-vein" (32:33). [Translator's Note]

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by a rabbinical associate of great learning, the Rabbi of the Amsterdam Ashkenazim, that

> when he was in Zhólkiew he became involved with one of these heretics, a man named Fishl Zloczow, who was expertly versed in the entire Talmud, which he knew practically by heart, for he was in the habit of shutting himself up in his room in order to pore over it, never ceasing from his studies (for he was a wealthy man) nor engaging in idle conversation. He would linger over his prayers twice as long as the Hasidim of olden times and was considered by all to be a most pious and ascetic individual. Once he came to him [i.e., to Emden's informant] in order to confess his sins and revealed that he belonged to the sect of Sabbatai Zevi, that he had eaten leavened bread on the Passover, and so forth, carrying on contritely all the while as though he had truly repented of his deeds. Soon afterward, however, he was caught in the act of committing grave transgressions of the Law and was excommunicated by the rabbis of Lithuania and Volhynia. When asked why he had not continued his hidden sins in private instead of [committing acts that led to his exposure] in public . . . he replied that on the contrary, the more shame he was forced to suffer for his faith, the better it was.

Here we are confronted with the type of the "believer" in its most paradoxical form, and, significantly, the individual in question was no ordinary Jew, but was rather conceded to be an excellent rabbinic scholar by an eminent authority who was in a position to know. One could hardly wish for a more perfect example of the nihilistic rejection of the Torah of *beriah*, which in this case was studied for the sole purpose that it might be better violated in spirit! The Jewish world was indeed showing signs of inner decay if types such as these were able to make themselves so easily at home in its midst. And yet underneath all these vagaries there was obviously a deep-seated desire for something positive which for lack of suitable conditions under which to function had come to nought.

Illustrative parables and homilies were also brought to bear on the doctrine of the sacred sin itself, and the reader cannot fail to notice that they are more than just paradoxical and highly offensive sayings. They breathe an entirely new spirit. "The patriarchs came into the world to restore [*le-takken*] the senses and this they did to four of them. Then came Sabbatai Zevi and restored the fifth, the sense of touch, which according to Aristotle and Maimonides is a source of shame to us, but which now has been raised by him to a place of honor and glory." As late as the beginning of the 19th century we find a fervent "believer" in Prague commenting in connection with the verse in Psalm 68, "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive," that the captive in question is the spiritual Torah of *atzilut*, which is called a "prisoner" because it was captured by Moses and forced to dwell in the prison cell of the material Torah of *beriah*:

> Such is the case with the inner Torah, for the outer is in opposition to the inner . . . and must be annihilated before the inner can be freed. And just as a woman from Ishmael [i.e., from a Moslem country] feels as though she has been freed from her confinement when she comes to Edom [i.e., a Christian country] . . . so continuing [to live] in Israel under the Torah of *beriah* is called "captivity," nor can she be given in marriage under the Torah of *beriah* but only in Edom, whereas in Israel one must remain a virgin—and [he who is able to, let him] understand.

The cryptic Frankist allusions at the end of this passage to Christianity and to "remaining a virgin" are rather obscure, but it is evident from the whole how strongly the rejection of the lower, or material, Torah of *beriah* continued to be upheld by Sabbatian Jews right down to the movement's last years. Elsewhere the author of the above, a thoughtful and deeply religious individual, explains that the commonly expressed belief that "no mischief can befall the righteous man [Prov. 12:21] nor can he be a cause of sin" must be understood in the light of the Torah of *atzilut* to mean that no matter how sinful the acts of the righteous may appear to others they are in fact always fully justified in themselves. He then adduces a number of astute mystical reasons for the necessity of certain transgressions, such as eating on the fast days, which he defends by arguing that fasting is a kind of spiritual "bribe" given to the *kelipot* and as such is not in keeping with the pure spiritual nature of the Torah of *atzilut*.

As to the ultimate step of apostasy, the arguments presented by the "radicals" in its behalf closely resemble those brought forward by the "moderates" to vindicate the apostasy of Sabbatai Zevi himself. We happen to have in our possession an illuminating document bearing on the disputes that arose over this question among the "believers" in the form of a homily by the well-known Sabbatian Nehemiah Hayon on the verse (Deut. 29:17), "Lest there be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go serve the gods of those nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood." The paradoxical solution arrived at by Hayon toward the close of his long discourse, which I quote here in abbreviated form, is an invaluable reflection of the perplexity and deep inner conflict experienced by those Sabbatians who were unable to choose between the "radical" and "moderate" positions:

> It is supposed among those versed in esoteric lore that the redemption can be brought about in either one of two ways: either Israel will have the power to withdraw all the sparks of holiness from [the realm of] the *kelipah* so that the

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kelipah will wither into nothing, or else the *kelipah* will become so filled with holiness that because of this repletion it must be spewn forth. . . . And this [fact], that the coming of the redemption can be prompted in one of two ways, was what the rabbis of blessed memory had in mind when they said that the Son of David would come either in a generation that was entirely guiltless (meaning when Israel by virtue of its good deeds had withdrawn all the sparks of holiness from the *kelipah*), or else in a generation that was entirely guilty (meaning when the *kelipah* had become so filled with holiness that it split its maw and perished). . . . And it is in consequence of this thesis that many, though their intentions are good, have mistakenly said, "Let us go worship other gods that we may fill the *kelipah* to bursting that it die." . . . Nay, do not reason with yourself, "Since it is impossible for all to become guiltless so as to withdraw the holiness from the *kelipah,* it is better that I become a sinner and so hasten the doom of the *kelipah* in that way that it might die and salvation might come," but rather, "Wait for the Lord and keep His way" [Ps. 37:34]: it is better that you endure the length of the exile and look to salvation than that you sin by worshiping other gods in order to bring on the redemption. This brings us to the meaning of the verse, "Lest there be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood [29:17], and it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse" [etc.; 29:18]. In other words, when he hears the words of the curse that is threatened . . . he turns away his heart from God and blesses himself in his heart [29:18], saying: "What Moses has written is true" . . . but [he thinks that] if he does not turn away his heart from God and if his intentions are good, that is, if he means to quench the *kelipah* by giving it holiness to drink, then certainly no evil will befall him, but on the contrary, God will turn the curse into a blessing. And this is the meaning of the words "and he blesses himself in his heart," for he says to himself, "I am sure that no harm will befall me . . . because I did not turn my heart [from God] . . . and because my intentions are good . . . [namely] to water the *kelipah,* the thirsty one, with the holiness that I extend to her that she may partake of it and die. It is of such a one that Moses said, "The Lord will not be willing to pardon him" [29:19]. . . . Even though his intentions were good and he only desired to hasten the redemption, he cannot be forgiven. . . . Nor does [the principle of] "A transgression committed for its own sake" [is greater than a commandment not committed for its own sake] apply here, since there [in its original context] it refers to an ordinary sin, as in the case of Jael [in killing Sisera; Judg. 4], whereas here, where it is a question of worshiping other gods, the Lord will not be willing to pardon him. . . . They [who act on this mistaken assumption] are powerless to destroy the *kelipah*; on the contrary, he [who attempts to fill the *kelipah* with holiness] will remain stuck in its midst, and this is why it is said that the Lord will not be willing to pardon him. . . . There is also another possible explanation [of the verse], namely, that when Moses said that the Lord would not be willing to pardon him he was not pronouncing a curse . . . but was thinking the following: . . . since he [the deliberate sinner] believes in his heart that God will not account his actions as sins, but will rather reward them . . . it is inconceivable that he should ever repent for he does not believe he has done wrong. . . . How then can the Holy One, blessed be He, forgive him? On the contrary, each time [he sins] he only angers Him the more . . . by thinking that he has done good instead of evil . . . and by saying that the greater a sinner he is the more he hastens the coming of the redemption. Such a one undoubtedly incurs the full power of the curse, since he deliberately violates all its injunctions. . . . "And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel" [29:20]. . . . But perhaps one can interpret the meaning of the text as follows: since such a person intends his deeds to redound to the benefit of all Israel . . . if after sinning and passing through the *kelipah* he reconsiders and repents completely, he undoubtedly succeeds in raising up many sparks from the *kelipah,* just as in the case of the human body when one is administered an emetic he does not simply vomit up the drug itself, but rather having opened his mouth proceeds to spew forth both the drug and everything that was near it. And so it is with the *kelipah*: sometimes it gains power over a man whose soul is great and does him harm, but as soon as he repents he spews forth all that was within him. And this is what Solomon meant when he said [Eccl. 8:9] there is a time when one man rules another to do him harm. [But since] There is a time [for such things] and miracles do not happen every hour, therefore Moses warns that one should not place himself in this peril. . . . "And the Lord shall separate him unto evil"; in other words, if he [the deliberate sinner] has been a cause of evil he is singled out [for judgment] from the tribes of Israel, for [it is a halakhic principle that] one cannot commit a transgression for another by proxy even if one has been authorized to do so, much less if one has not been, so that having gone [and committed evil] of his own accord, there is no doubt that the evil which results [from his actions] will not be imputed to Israel as a whole. But if he does good—that is, if he repents wholeheartedly and raises up sparks from Israel by virtue of his repentance—then all the tribes of Israel have a part in this good; it is only in the evil that they do not have a part.

Likely as not, this entire passage has an autobiographical basis. In any event, it is clear that the attitude of its author toward the "voluntary Marranos" whose conversion he decries yet understands so well is far from being hostile or vindictive.

ONE OF THE strongest factors in the development of a nihilistic mentality among the "radicals" was their desire to negate an objective historical order in which the exile

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continued in full force and the beginnings of the redemption went unnoticed by all but the "believers" themselves. Understandably, during the period now in question this antipathy toward outward reality remained confined to the area of religion alone, the world of ghetto Jewry still being sufficiently stable to preclude its active politicalization. Prior to the French Revolution, indeed, there was no connection between the ideas of Sabbatianism and the growing undercurrent of discontent with the *ancien régime* in Europe. It was only when changing times had widened the "believers'" horizons and revealed to them the existence of more tangible ways of affecting the course of history than the violation of the Torah of *beriah* that they too began to dream of revolutionizing the structure of society itself. In a sense this was to mean the restoration to Jewish Messianism of its traditional political content, which, as I have shown, the Sabbatian movement transformed beyond recognition. As long as external conditions were not conducive to this, even the "radicals" remained politically unaware, nor were they able to conceive of any other method of revitalizing Jewish life than the subversion of its most sacred values; but it is not surprising that once the opportune moment arose the essentially this-worldly emphasis of Jewish Messianism which Sabbatianism had striven to suppress should have come to be stressed again. I shall have more to say on this important subject; first, however, I would like to comment on a related matter, one which will serve as yet another example of the uniquely paradoxical dialectic of Sabbatian thought: its attitude toward Palestine.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER the collapse of the initial messianic expectations aroused by Sabbatai Zevi, scattered groups of Sabbatians began to express their opposition to the idea of emigration to the Holy Land. As has now been established, Nathan of Gaza himself was of the opinion that "for the time being it is best not to go to the Land of Israel." But this point of view did not go unchallenged. A number of "believers," especially after 1700, attempted to demonstrate by mystical reasons that in the light of Sabbatian doctrine emigration was indeed desirable after all. Individuals from both the circle of Abraham Rovigo and the whole band of "Hasidim" centered around Rabbi Judah Hasid actually settled in Palestine as a result of specifically Sabbatian aspirations. One belief that was current at the time was that on the occasion of Sabbatai Zevi's second advent, which would take place forty years after his "concealment," a true mystical knowledge of his nature would be revealed to those of his followers, and only to those, who were living in the Holy Land. Sabbatian nihilists like Hayyim Malakh, who were contemporaries of such groups, also were in favor of going to the Land of Israel, from which they too undoubtedly expected special revelation to come; in addition, they may have felt that there was an advantage to violating the Torah of *beriah* on the most consecrated ground of all, on the analogy of "conquering the queen in her own home." As late as the middle of the 18th century Sabbatian nihilists in Podolia still had contacts and acquaintances in Palestine, while a number of the emissaries sent by the Palestinian Jewish community to raise funds in the Diaspora were Sabbatian scholars who acted on the side both as secret propagators of the faith and as contacts between "believers" in different localities. Many of these, such as the author of the *The Book of the Adornment of Days*, a beautiful and detailed description (in Hebrew) of the life of a Kabbalist devotee all through the year, were undoubtedly "moderates," but regarding many others we will probably never know exactly where they stood.

Toward the middle of the 18th century, however, a reaction took place, so that we find a distinct anti-Palestinian bias setting in throughout the movement. Whether or not the anti-Palestinian sermon cited by Jacob Emden in his *Edut be-Ya'akov* (44b) is really the handiwork of Jonathan Eibeschütz is uncertain, but in any case there can be no question of its being a total fabrication, inasmuch as similar ideas to those expressed in it can be found in other Sabbatian documents which Emden could not possibly have seen. Among the Frankists an astonishing and clear-cut ideology of Jewish territorialism (as distinct from Palestine-centered tendencies) developed at about this time, apparently as a result of Frank's own personal ambitions. In a word, on the very eve of its absorption of new political ideas Sabbatian nihilism completely reversed its previously positive evaluation of the role of the Land of Israel, so that when shortly afterward it began to speak the language of a revived political Messianism and to prophesy the rebirth of the Jewish nation as one outcome of an impending world revolution, there was no longer any real interest on its part in the idea of the Land of Israel as a national center. As stated by the Frankist writer in Prague whom we have already had occasion to quote, Israel's exile is not a consequence of its sins at all, but is rather part of a plan designed to bring about the destruction of the *kelipot* all over the world, so that "even if several thousands or tens-of-thousands of Jews are enabled to return to the Land of Israel, nothing has been completed." According to the same author this new doctrine of the exile is "a secret mystical principle which was hidden from all the sages until it was [recently] revealed in Poland." And thus we see how in the final stages of Sabbatianism the intrinsic nature of the exile came to be reconsidered in an entirely new light.

The figure of Sabbatai Zevi himself was also recast by the passage of time, becoming entirely mythical: gradually the element of historical truth was diminished until nothing was left but a

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legendary hero who had inaugurated a new epoch of world history. Even in Sabbatai Zevi's lifetime one of his first disciples, Abraham Yakhini, could write of him (in his book *Vavei ha-Amudim*): "Just as one of the seventy faces of the Torah is concerned entirely with the resurrection of the dead, as is to be seen in [the commentaries of] the *Zohar* on several chapters [of the Pentateuch], [the allusions to the resurrection in] the other chapters being inaccessible to us because of the limitations of our intellects, so one of the seventy faces of the Torah is concerned entirely with the Messiah, our lord and master, may his majesty increase, and shortly, when he reveals himself to us [completely], we shall be privileged to understand the entire Torah in this way." It is little wonder that the concrete historical figure of Sabbatai Zevi came to be transformed by his followers in much the same manner as Jesus's was by his, if not more so, since his conversion into a mythological figure was even more complete. Like the early Christians, in fact, the "radicals" eventually came to believe that the Messiah had not been a mere superior human being, but an incarnation of God Himself in human form. This new interpretation of "the mystery of the Godhead" was accepted by all the "radical" groups down to the last of the Frankists and was considered by them to be the most profound mystic truth in their entire body of doctrine. Whence it came cannot yet be determined: perhaps from the collective memory of thousands of Marranos, perhaps from Christian books or anti-Christian polemics, or perhaps from the "believers'" own inner conflict, the paradoxical cause of which—an apostate Messiah—may have led them to adopt the same paradoxical solution that a like contradiction—a crucified Messiah—produced in yet another group of Jews caught in the toils of religious turmoil. And perhaps, too, all of these factors combined to work together.

THE DOCTRINE of an incarnate God, which immediately became a bone of contention between the "radicals" and the "moderates" in the Sabbatian camp, was limited at first to the figure of Sabbatai Zevi himself. According to one view, when the redemption began, "the Holy One, blessed be He, removed Himself upward and Sabbatai Zevi ascended to be God in His place." Since in the Sabbatian faith "the Holy One, blessed be He," was synonymous, as we have seen, with "the God of Israel," this meant that Sabbatai Zevi had now assumed the latter's title and become "the Holy King." Before long, however, the "believers" in Salonika replaced this teaching with another: "the Holy King" had Himself been incarnated in the person of the Messiah in order to restore the world and nullify the Torah of *beriah*. It was in this form that the doctrine was accepted by the Sabbatian nihilists in Podolia. A prayer of theirs that has come into our possession reads: "May it be Thy will that we prosper in Thy Torah and cling to Thy commandments, and mayst Thou purify my thoughts to worship Thee in truth . . . and may all our deeds in the Torah of *atzilut* [meaning: transgressions!] be only for the sake of Thy great name, O Señor Santo,* that we may recognize Thy greatness, for Thou art the true God and King of the universe, our living Messiah who wast in this earthly world and didst nullify the Torah of *beriah* and didst reascend to Thy place to conduct all the worlds."

But this doctrine of a single incarnation did not long remain unaltered in turn. Apparently among the Sephardic converts to Islam the belief developed that the leaders of the "believers" in every age were reincarnations of Sabbatai Zevi. Whether this actually meant that these leaders—particularly Baruchya, who was one of the foremost promulgators of the new belief—were thought to be, or considered themselves, divine incarnations no less than the Messiah himself is not entirely clear, but there are good reasons for believing that the gospel preached by Jacob Frank at the beginning of his career was nothing but this Sephardic teaching with a number of modifications to suit his own personality, and Frank himself, though he never said so in so many words, was correctly understood by his disciples to imply that he personally was the living God once again incarnated on earth. Not without a certain "consistency" the Frankists held that each of the three hypostases of the Godhead had its individual incarnation in a separate Messiah: Sabbatai Zevi, whom Frank was in the habit of referring to simply as "the First One," had been the embodiment of "the Ancient Holy One," Frank himself was the personification of "the Holy King," and the third hypostasis, the *Shekhinah*, variously known in the writings of the Kabbalah as "the Kingdom" (*malkhut*), "the Lady" (*matronita*), "the Maiden," and "the Doe," was to appear in the form of a woman. It is hard not to associate this novelty—a female Messiah, referred to by Frank as "the Virgin," who was yet to be revealed and whose task it would be to complete the work of the redemption—with the influence of certain mystical Christian sects prevalent at about this time in Eastern Europe that believed in a triad of saviors corresponding to the threefold nature of God and in a feminine incarnation of the *Sophia*, the Divine Wisdom or Holy Spirit. With one of these groups, in fact, the "Philipovicites" in Rumania and the Ukraine, the Frankists were in such close contact that one of its former leaders publicly defended them before the Catholic authorities of Poland.

Interpreted in this manner the redemption was a process filled with incarnations of the divinity.

* The Spanish term used to denote Baruchya of Salonika in the sect of his followers who saw in him the reborn Sabbatai Zevi and God incarnate.

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Even the "radicals" in Prague who clung to their Jewish identity and strove to defend their beliefs by means of Jewish concepts and sources were won over to this view, and although their hostility to Christianity as an institution knew no bounds, references to "the mystery of the incarnation" can be found throughout their literature. The anti-Sabbatian polemicists who accused the "believers" of corporealizing the idea of God were perfectly right in their assertions, but this fact, which seemed to them a damning admission of weakness, was in reality their opponents' greatest source of pride! "Because the Godhead has a body the sting of death is gone," wrote one "believer." On the surface it would seem that the exaggerated spirituality of the World of *atzilut* and the yearning to see God in the flesh that was evidenced by the doctrine of a messianic incarnation were two mutually opposed tendencies, and yet, after all that has been said here, it should not be difficult to see that underlying both was the struggle of a new sensibility toward life to express itself by means of a religious vocabulary inherited from the old. In such cases the paradox is always the only solution.

In summary, the five distinguishing beliefs of "radical" Sabbatianism are:

1) The belief in the necessary apostasy of the Messiah and in the sacramental nature of the descent into the realm of the *kelipot*.

2) The belief that the "believer" must not appear to be as he really is.

3) The belief that the Torah of *atzilut* must be observed through the violation of the Torah of *beriah*.

4) The belief that the First Cause and the God of Israel are not the same, the former being the God of rational philosophy, the latter the God of religion.

5) The belief in three hypostases of the Godhead, all of which have been or will be incarnated in human form.

These theses amply demonstrate, in my opinion, that in the onward course of the Sabbatian movement the world of traditional Judaism was shattered beyond repair. In the minds of those who took part in this revolutionary destruction of old values a special susceptibility to new ideas inevitably came to exist. Well might the "believers" have asked how long their newly released energies and emotions were to go on being aimlessly squandered. Were their lives required to be dominated by paradoxes forever?

But just as the character of the Sabbatian movement was dictated by the circumstances of the movement's birth, so, in turn, it was to dictate the circumstances of the movement's disintegration and death. For as the "believers" had meant to fire the sparks of holiness with the *kelipot*, so they were to wander in the blackest of blind alleys; and as they had wished to "play" with "the other side," the dark side of life, so they were to dance in the devil's own arms. And last and most ironically of all: as they had hastened to come to the aid of the Redeemer—"to do as he did for strange are his deeds, to worship as he worships for his worship is alien" (Isa. 28:21)—so they were to be induced in the end to play into the hands of a man like Jacob Frank.

VII

JACOB FRANK (1726-91) will always be remembered as one of the most frightening phenomena in the whole of Jewish history: a religious leader who, whether for purely self-interested motives or otherwise, was in all his actions a truly corrupt and degenerate individual. Indeed, it might plausibly be argued that in order to exhaust completely its seemingly endless potential for the contradictory and the unexpected, the Sabbatian movement was in need of just such a strongman, a man who could snuff out its last inner lights and pervert whatever will to truth and goodness was still to be found in the mazelike ruins of the "believers' " souls. Even if one is willing to concede that the doctrine of the sacred sin, the *mitzvah ha-ba'ah ba-averah*, was not lacking in certain insights, there can be no question but that these were thoroughly debased upon coming in contact with the person of Frank. But just as the "believers" had deliberately chosen to follow that dangerous path along which nothing is impossible, so it was perhaps precisely this that attracted them to Frank, for here was a man who was not afraid to push on to the very end, to take the final step into the abyss, to drain the cup of desolation and destruction to the lees until the last bit of holiness had been made into a mockery. His admirers, who themselves fell far short of him in respect of this ability, were won over by his intrepidness, which neither the fear of God nor the terrors of the bottomless pit were able to daunt, and saw in him the type of the true saint, a new Sabbatai Zevi and an incarnate God.

If the full truth be told, however, even after one has taken into account Frank's unscrupulous opportunism, his calculated deceits, and his personal ambitions, none of which really concern us here, he remains a figure of tremendous if satanic power. True, neither the promises and pledges with which he lured his disciples, nor his visionary schemes for the future that was to follow the general cataclysm of the times seem particularly impressive today, although of his territorialist program it may at least be said that besides revealing his own lust for power it expressed in a bizarre yet unmistakable manner the desire of his followers for a reconstruction of Jewish national and even economic existence; and yet for all the negativism of his teachings, they nonetheless contained a genuine creed of life.

Frank was a nihilist, and his nihilism possessed a rare authenticity. Certainly, its primitive feroc-

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ity is frightening to behold. Certainly, too, Frank himself was not only an unlettered man, but boasted continually of his own lack of culture. But in spite of all this—and here is the significant point—we are confronted in his person with the extraordinary spectacle of a powerful and tyrannical soul living in the middle of the 18th century and yet immersed entirely in a mythological world of its own making. Out of the ideas of radical Sabbatianism, a movement in which he was apparently raised and educated, Frank was able to weave a complete myth of religious nihilism. This, surely, is worthy of attention.

Frank was not an original speculative thinker, but he did have a decided talent for the pithy, the strikingly illustrative, and the concretely symbolic expression. Despite their nihilistic content, his sayings in *The Sayings of the Lord (Slawa Pańskie)* are not very different in form from those of many famous Hasidic Zaddikim, and for all his despotic nature he possessed a hidden poetic impulse which appears all the more surprising in the light of his customary savagery. Even Kraushar, who like his predecessors was intent on emphasizing everything that seemed incoherent or grotesque in Frank's recorded sayings, was forced to admit that on occasion they show vigor and imagination. For my own part, I fail to see how any sensitive individual who reads the many excerpts published by Kraushar from *The Sayings of the Lord* with a degree of understanding—something which it is far from impossible to do—can contemplate them without emotion. But how many have even troubled to make the effort?*

Frank was particularly gifted at the creation of new images and symbols, and in spite of its popular coloration his language is full of mystical overtones. Of the terminology of the Kabbalah he rarely made use, at times even criticizing the Sabbatian sectarians in Podolia for their continuing absorption in Kabbalistic ideas, which he called "madness." Anyone familiar with "radical" Sabbatian thought, however, can readily detect its continued presence beneath the new verbal façade. Thus, in place of the familiar Sabbatian "three knots of the faith" we now have "the Good God," "the Big Brother who stands before the Lord," and "the Virgin," terms which are highly suggestive for all their earthy quality. The *kelipah*, the Torahs of *beriah* and *atzilut*, the sparks of holiness, indeed all the conceptual usages that are basic to Sabbatian theological discourse, have disappeared entirely, to be replaced by a completely exoteric vocabulary. Even the figure of Sabbatai Zevi has greatly declined in importance. The world of Sabbatianism itself, on the other hand, remains intact, or rather, has reached that ultimate stage of its development where it verges on self-annihilation.

In the following pages I will attempt to present an overall view of Frank's religious teachings, to the extent, that is, that they can be fully reconstructed from his many sayings, and in a form that they apparently did not completely attain until after his conversion to Catholicism. Although they will occasionally seem to contradict one another, they are for the most part mutually consistent. The somberness of their world or, more accurately, world-ruin, did not in fact encourage a great deal of variety, although this did not prevent the "believers," including even the traditionalists among them in Prague, from finding a dark fascination in its tidings, which Frank himself brutally summed up in a single brusque remark: "It is one thing to worship God—and quite another to follow the path that I have taken."

ACCORDING TO FRANK, the "cosmos" (*tevel*), or "earthly world" (*tevel ha-gashmi*) as it was called by the sectarians in Salonika, is not the creation of the Good or Living God, for if it were it would be external and man would be immortal, whereas as we see from the presence of death in the world this is not at all the case. To be sure, there are "worlds" which belong to "the Good God" too, but these are hidden from all but the "believers." In them are divine powers, one of whom is "the King of Kings," who is also known as "the Big Brother" and "He who stands before the Lord." The evil power that created the cosmos and introduced death into the world, on the other hand, is connected with the feminine, and is most probably composed of three "gods" or "Rulers of the World," one of whom is the Angel of Death. In any case, it is these "Rulers," all of whom have been incarnated on earth in human form, who block the path leading to "the Good God," who is unknown to men, for mystic knowledge of Him has as yet been revealed to no one, nor has the holy soul (*nishmata*) that emanates from Him been in any creature, not even in Sabbatai Zevi. In the current aeon there are three "Rulers of the World," "Life," "Wealth," and "Death," the last of which must be replaced by "Wisdom"—a task, however, that is not easily accomplished, for although "Wisdom" is in some mysterious manner connected to "the Good God," the latter is still not able to reveal Himself to mankind, "for the world is in the thrall of laws that are no good."

Hence it is necessary to cast off the domination of these laws, which are laws of death and harmful to mankind. To bring this about, the Good God has sent messengers such as the patriarchs "who dug wells," Moses, Jesus, and others,

* Frank's sayings were never published in Hebrew because the Hebrew translation of the second volume of Kraushar's history, in which they appear, was prevented from going to press at the last minute by the news of Kraushar's conversion to Catholicism, which shocked the Jewish public. I am deeply indebted to my friend Miss Hadassah Goldgart for furnishing me with an exact version of the original Polish text.

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into the world. Moses pointed out the true way, but it was found to be too difficult, whereupon he resorted to "another religion" and presented men with "the Law of Moses," whose commandments are injurious and useless. "The Law of the Lord," on the other hand—the spiritual Torah of the Sabbatians—"is perfect" (Ps. 19:8), only no man has yet been able to attain it. Finally, the Good God sent Sabbatai Zevi into the world, but he too was powerless to achieve anything, because he was unable to find the true way. "But my desire is to lead you toward Life." Nevertheless, the way to Life is not easy, for it is the way of nihilism and it means to free oneself of all laws, conventions, and religions, to adopt every conceivable attitude and to reject it, and to follow one's leader step for step into the abyss. Baptism is a necessity, as Frank said prior to his conversion, "because Christianity has paved the way for us." Thirty years afterward this same "Christian" observed: "This much I tell you: Christ, as you know, said that he had come to redeem the world from the hands of the devil, but I have come to redeem it from all the laws and customs that have ever existed. It is my task to annihilate all this so that the Good God can reveal Himself."

THE ANNIHILATION of every religion and positive system of belief—this was the "true way" the "believers" were expected to follow. Concerning the redemptive powers of havoc and destruction Frank's imagination knew no limits. "Wherever Adam trod a city was built but wherever I set foot all will be destroyed, for I came into this world only to destroy and to annihilate. But what I build, will last forever." Mankind is engaged in a war without quarter with the "no-good" laws that are in power—"and I say to you, all who would be warriors must be without religion, which means that they must reach freedom under their own power and seize hold of the Tree of Life." No region of the human soul can remain untouched by this struggle. In order to ascend one must first descend. "No man can climb a mountain until he has first descended to its foot. Therefore we must descend and be cast down to the bottom rung, for only then can we climb to the infinite. This is the mystic principle of Jacob's Ladder, which I have seen and which is shaped like a V." Again, "I did not come into this world to lift you up but rather to cast you down to the bottom of the abyss. Further than this it is impossible to descend, nor can one ascend again by virtue of one's own strength, for only the Lord can raise one up from the depths by the power of His hand." The descent into the abyss requires not only the rejection of all religions and conventions, but also the commission of "strange acts," and this in turn demands the voluntary abasement of one's own sense of self, so that libertinism and the achievement of that state of utter shamelessness which leads to a *tikkun* of the soul are one and the same thing.

"We are all now obliged to enter the abyss" in which all laws and religions are annihilated. But the way is perilous, for there are powers and "gods"—these being none other than the three "Rulers of the World"—that do not let one pass. It is necessary to elude them and continue onward, and this none of the ancients was able to do, neither Solomon, nor Jesus, nor even Sabbatai Zevi. To accomplish this, that is, to overcome the opposing powers, which are the gods of other religions, it is imperative that one be "perfectly silent," even deceitful. This is the mystic principle of "the burden of silence" (*masa' dumah*; Isa. 21:11), i.e., of maintaining the great reserve that is becoming to the "believer" (a new version of the original Sabbatian injunction against appearing as one really is!). Indeed, this is the principle of the "true way" itself: "Just as a man who wishes to conquer a fortress does not do it by means of making a speech, but must go there himself with all his forces, so we too must go our way in silence." "It is better to see than to speak, for the heart must not reveal what it knows to the mouth." "Here there is no need for scholars because here belongs the burden of silence." "When I was baptized in Lvov I said to you: so far, so good! But from here on: a burden of silence! Muzzle your mouths!" "Our forefathers were always talking, only what good did it do them and what did they accomplish? But we are under the burden of silence: here we must be quiet and bear what is needful, and that is why it is a burden." "When a man goes from one place to another he should hold his tongue. It is the same as with a man drawing a bow: the longer he holds his breath, the further the arrow will fly."

From the abyss, if only the "burden of silence" is borne, "holy knowledge" will emerge. The task, then, is "to acquire knowledge," "and the passageway to knowledge is to combine with the nations" but not, of course, to intermingle with them. He who reaches the destination will lead a life of anarchic liberty as a free man. "The place that we are going to tolerates no laws, for all that comes from the side of Death, whereas we are bound for Life." The name of this place is "Edom" or "Esau," and the way to it, which must be followed by the light of "knowledge" (*gnosis*) and under the "burden of silence" through the depths of the abyss, is called "the way to Esau." This was the road taken by Jacob the patriarch, "the first Jacob," all of whose deeds prefigured those of "the last Jacob"—Jacob Frank. "Esau" too was foreshadowed by the Esau of the Bible, though only in a veiled way: "Esau the son of Jacob was but the curtain that hangs before the entrance to the king's inner chambers." Herein lies the mystical principle of the wells dug by the patriarchs, as well as the mystic content of the story (Gen. 29) of how Jacob came to a well that

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had already been dug, rolled the stone from its mouth, and encountered Rachel and her father Laban. Another who found the passage to "Esau" was the sorcerer Balaam. "Esau" belongs to the realm of the Good God where the power of death is made nought, and it is also the dwelling place of "the Virgin," she who is called Rachel in the biblical stories about Jacob and is elsewhere known as "the beautiful maiden who has no eyes." She it is who is the real Messiah (who cannot, contrary to traditional opinion, be a man) and to her "all the king's weapons are surrendered," for she is also the much sought-after "Divine Wisdom" or *Sophia* who is destined to take "Death's" place as one of the three "Rulers of the World." For the present, however, she is hidden in a castle and kept from the sight of all living creatures; all the "strange acts," in comparison with which the "strange fire" offered before the Lord by Aaron's two sons (Lev. 10) was but a trifle, are committed for the sole purpose of reaching her. Again, she is the "holy serpent" who guards the garden, and he who asked what the serpent was doing in Paradise was simply betraying his ignorance. As of yet, the place of "Esau," the home of "the Virgin" and of true salvation, has not been attained by anyone, but its hidden light will first be revealed to the "believers," who will have the distinction of being its soldiers and fighting on its behalf.

These are some of the main features of Frank's teaching. It is a veritable myth of religious nihilism, the work of a man who did not live at all in the world of rational argument and discussion, but inhabited a realm entirely made up of mythological entities. Indeed, to anyone familiar with the history of religion it might seem far more likely that he was dealing here with an antinomian myth from the second century composed by such nihilistic Gnostics as Carpocrates and his followers than that all this was actually taught and believed by Polish Jews living on the eve of the French Revolution, among whom neither the "master" nor his "disciples" had the slightest inkling that they were engaged in resuscitating an ancient tradition! Not only the general train of thought, but even some of the symbols and terms are the same! And yet, none of this seems as surprising as it may appear to be at first glance when we reflect that no less than the Frankists, the Gnostics of antiquity developed their thought within a biblical framework, for all that they completely inverted the biblical values. They too believed that Esau and Balaam were worshipers of "the Good God," they too converted the serpent in the Garden of Eden into a symbol of *gnosis*, salvation, and the true "Divine Wisdom" that guided men to freedom from the evil rule of the Demiurge by teaching them to disobey his laws and institutions, and they too held that the Law of the good and "alien" God, which enjoined the commission of "strange acts," was directly opposed to the Law of Moses, which was largely the promulgation of the irascible Creator.

FRANK'S ULTIMATE VISION of the future was based upon the still unrevealed laws of the Torah of *atzilut* which he promised his disciples would take effect once they had "come to Esau," that is, when the passage through the "abyss" with its unmitigated destruction and negation was finally accomplished. In seeking to elucidate this gospel of libertinism I can do no better than to quote a passage from the excellent book on Gnosticism by the philosopher Hans Jonas in which he discusses the development of a libertinist ethic among the nihilistically minded pneumatics of the second century:*

> The spiritualist morality of these pneumatics possessed a revolutionary character that did not stop short of actively implementing its beliefs. In this doctrine of immoralism we are confronted both with a total and overt rejection of all traditional norms of behavior, and with an exaggerated feeling of freedom that regards the license to do as it pleases as a proof of its own authenticity and as a favor bestowed upon it from above. . . . The entire doctrine rests on the concept of an "extra spirit" as a privilege conferred upon a new type of human being who from here on is no longer to be subject to the standards and obligations that have hitherto always been the rule. Unlike the ordinary, purely "psychic" individual, the pneumatic is a free man, free from the demands of the Law . . . and, inasmuch as it implies a positive realization of this freedom, his uninhibited behavior is far from being a purely negative reaction. Such moral nihilism fully reveals the crisis of a world in transition: by arbitrarily asserting its own complete freedom and pluming itself on its abandonment to the sacredness of sin, the self seeks to fill the vacuum created by the "interregnum" between two different and opposing periods of law. Especially characteristic of this over-all mood of anarchy are its hostility toward all established conventions, its need to define itself in terms that are clearly exclusive of the great majority of the human race, and its desire to flout that authority of the "divine" powers, that is, of the world-rulers who are the custodians of the old standards of morality. Over and above the rejection of the past for its own sake, therefore, we are faced here with an additional motive, namely, the desire to heap insult on its guardians and to revolt openly against them. Here we have revolution without the slightest speculative dissemblance and this is why the gospel of libertinism stands at the center of the gnostic revolution in religious thought. No doubt, too, there was in addition to all this an element of pure "daredeviltry" which the Gnostic could proudly point to as an indication of his reliance on his own "spiritual" nature. Indeed, in all periods of revolution human beings have been fond of the intoxicating power of big words.

* Hans Jonas, *Gnosis und spätuntiker Geist* (1934), I, 234.

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All of this is fully applicable to both "radical" Sabbatianism in general and to the Frankist movement in particular; the mentality that Jonas describes could not possibly, indeed, assume a more radical form than Frank's nihilistic myth. It goes without saying, of course, that in a given age myth and reality do not always coincide, and in the case of Frankists the former was undoubtedly the extremer of the two, even if Fran himself was not far from living up to it in actual practice, as emerged from the manuscript of *The Chronicles of the Life of the Lord* which one of the Frankist families permitted Kraushar to use and which afterward vanished. But in any event the significant point is the fact that the myth should have been born at all and that a considerable number of ghetto Jews should have come to regard it as a way to "political and spiritual liberation," to quote the words used by the educated Frankist Gabriel Porges in Prague to describe the movement's aims to his son after Frank himself was no longer alive. Clearly, for the Jew who saw in Frankism the solution to his personal problems and queries, the world of Judaism had been utterly dashed to pieces, although he himself may not have traveled the "true way" at all, may even, in fact, have continued to remain outwardly the most orthodox of observers.

VIII

We will apparently never know with any certainty why most of the Sabbatians in Podolia followed Frank's lead and became Catholics while their counterparts in Western Europe, who for the most part also regarded Frank as their spiritual leader, chose to remain Jews. Our knowledge in this area, which is of such crucial importance to an understanding of Jewish history in the countries in question, is practically nil and we must content ourselves with mere speculation. Possibly the decisive factor was the differing social structures of the two groups. The majority of the Sabbatians in Podolia were members of the lower class and few (which is not to say none at all) of those who converted were educated individuals. The Sabbatians in Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, on the other hand, were largely from a more wealthy background and many of them were men of considerable rabbinical learning. As is frequently the case with religious sects, Sabbatianism was transmitted by entire families and not just by isolated individuals. Even today records exist to prove that a number of families, some of them quite prominent, which were known for their Sabbatian allegiances about 1740, were still clinging to "the holy faith" over sixty years later. For such groups traditional Judaism had become a permanent outer cloak for their true beliefs, although there were undoubtedly different viewpoints among them as to the exact nature of the relationship. Not all were followers of Frank, albeit the Frankists in Prague were spiritually the strongest among them and were extremely active in disseminating their views. Most probably those Sabbatians who had once been disciples of Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschütz were also to be found in this category. In any case, the fact remains that among these groups the number of conversions was very small. Many of their adherents may have desired to reach "the holy gnosis of Edom," but few were willing to pass through the gates of Christianity in order to do so.

On the whole, however, in the years following Frank's death the various Sabbatian groups still in existence continued to develop along more or less parallel lines. Four principal documents bearing on this final phase of Sabbatianism have come down to us: *The Book of the Prophecy of Isaiah* written by an apostate "believer" in Offenbach; a long sermon on the *Alenu* prayer published by Wessely from a lengthy Frankist manuscript; several Frankist epistles as presented in substance by Peter Beer; and a commentary on the book *En Ya'akov* that came into the possession of Dr. H. Brody, when he was Chief Rabbi of Prague. All of these sources share the same world, differing only in that the first speaks in praise of baptism and heaps "prophetic" imprecations on the Jewish people, its rabbis and officials, whereas the others, written by Jews, preserve silence on these topics. Also found in the volume containing the commentary on the *En Ya'akov* was a Frankist commentary on the *Hallel* prayer, the joyous faith and emotion of which are genuinely moving. The man who wrote these few pages was a pure and immaculate spirit and his jubilant profession of "the redemption and deliverance of his soul" is obviously deeply felt. Like most of the Sabbatians in the West, he may never have met Frank face to face, but on the other hand, the author of *The Prophecy of Isaiah,* who did, also believed him to be the incarnation of the Living God, "the true Jacob who never dies," and clung to this feeling of salvation throughout his life.

In all of these documents the Frankist myth has lost much of its radical wildness. Most of its component parts are still recognizable in the form of "profound mysteries" that are to be revealed only to the prudent, but these too have undergone considerable modification. In many places, for instance, Frank's insistence that the "believers" were literally to become soldiers is so completely allegorized that it loses both its logic and its paradoxicality. The most striking change, however, is that while the doctrine of "strange acts" remains, and continues to be associated with the appearance of "the Virgin" or "the Lady," there is no longer the slightest reference to any ethic of libertinism. Here radicalism has retraced its steps and returned from the moral sphere to the historical. Even if we suppose that the authors of these documents were careful not to reveal them-

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selves entirely in their writings—an assumption that many of their cryptic allusions would indeed seem to bear out—it is nonetheless apparent that libertine behavior is no longer considered by them to be a binding religious obligation. Instead there is an increased effort to understand the "strange acts" of the religious heroes of the past, particularly of the characters in the Bible, a book which the "believers" no less than the orthodox regarded as the ultimate authority; here too, however, the emphasis falls on vindicating such cases in theory rather than on imitating them in practice. In Offenbach, it is true, certain scandalous acts continued to be performed on no less than the Day of Atonement itself, but this had degenerated into a mere semblance, whereas "in good faith" among themselves the "believers" were no longer in the habit of carrying on such practices. As for the mystic principle of the "conjugation" of masculine and feminine elements in the divine worlds that had played so large a role in the unorthodox Kabbalistic theories of the nihilists and the "radicals," this too, to judge by the sources in our possession, was now "toned down." All in all, while the idea of violating the Torah of *beriah* reminded a cardinal principle of "the holy faith," its application was transferred to other areas, particularly to dreams of a general revolution that would sweep away the past in a single stroke so that the world might be rebuilt.

TOWARD THE END of Frank's life the hopes he had entertained of abolishing all laws and conventions took on a very real historical significance. As a result of the French Revolution the Sabbatian and Frankist subversion of the old morality and religion was suddenly placed in a new and relevant context, and perhaps not only in the abstract, for we know that Frank's nephews, whether as "believers" or out of some other motive, were active in high revolutionary circles in Paris and Strasbourg. Seemingly, the Revolution had come to corroborate the fact that the nihilist outlook had been correct all along: now the pillars of the world were indeed being shaken, and all the old ways seemed about to be overturned. For the "believers" all this had a double significance. On the one hand, with the characteristic self-centeredness of a spiritualist sect, they saw in it a sign of special divine intervention in their favor, since in the general upheaval the inner renewal and their clandestine activities based on it would be more likely to go unnoticed. This opinion was expressed by Frank himself and was commonly repeated by his followers in Prague. At the same time that the Revolution served as a screen for the world of inwardness, however, it was also recognized as having a practical value in itself, namely, the undermining of all spiritual and secular authorities, the power of the priesthood most of all. The "believers" in the ghettos of Austria, whose admiration for certain doctrines of the Christian Church (such as Incarnation) went hand in hand with a deep hatred of its priests and institutions, were particularly alive to this last possibility. Here the fashionable anti-clericalism of the times found a ready reception. In great and enthusiastic detail the Frankist author of *The Prophecy of Isaiah* describes the coming apocalypse which is destined to take place solely that the Jewish people might be reborn, repudiate its rabbis and other false leaders, and embrace the faith of "the true Jacob" as befits "the People of the God of Jacob." To the commentator on the *Hallel* prayer writing in Prague, the verse in Psalm 118, "The right hand of the Lord is exalted," meant that "if the right hand of the Lord begins to emerge, the deceitful left hand of Esau and his priests and the deceitful sword will retire"—an allusion, of course, to the combined rule of the secular and ecclesiastical powers. Throughout this literature apocalyptic ideas mingle freely with the political theories of the Revolution, which were also intended, after all, to lead to a "political and spiritual liberation," to cite that illuminating and undeservedly neglected phrase with which the Frankists in Prague, as we have seen, defined the aims of their movement.

All this culminated in the remarkable case of "The Red Epistle," of 1799, a circular letter written in red ink and addressed by the Frankists in Offenbach, the last Mecca of the sect, to a large number of Jewish congregations, exhorting them to embrace "the holy religion of Edom." The theoretical part of this document—approximately the last third of it—is highly interesting. Here, in a single page, the epistlers summarize their beliefs without a single overt reference to Christianity, the word "Edom," as we have seen, possessing a more specialized meaning in their vocabulary. Besides bearing all the markings of the Frankist myth, the epistle contains the familiar ingredients of the Sabbatian homily as well, particularly in its audacious exegeses of biblical stories, Midrashim and Aggadot, passages from the *Zohar*, and Kabbalistic texts. In sum, an entire mystical theory of revolution. The passage that I am going to quote exemplifies perfectly the thinking, style, and cryptic manner of expression of this type of Frankist literature:

> Know that "it is time for the Lord to work, [for] they have made void Thy law" [Ps. 119:-226], and in this connection the rabbis of blessed memory have said [*Sanhedrin* 97a] [that the Messiah will not come] "until the kingdom is entirely given over to heresy" [this being the mystical meaning of the words in Leviticus 13: 13] "it is all turned white and then he is clean," and as is explained in the book *Zror ha-Mor,* his servants are clean too. For the time has come that Jacob [was referring to when he] promised, "I will come unto my Lord unto Seir" [Gen. 33:14], for we know that until now he has not

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yet gone thither; and he [who will fulfill the verse] is our Holy Lord Jacob, "the most perfect of all" [*Zohar*, II, 23a] and the most excellent of the patriarchs, for he grasps both sides [*Zohar*, I, 147a], binding one extreme to the other until the last extreme of all. But although last, he who will rise upon earth and say, "Arise O Virgin of Israel," is not least [i.e., he is more important and favored than the first Jacob]. Nay, he is certainly not dead, and it is he who leads us on the true way in the holy religion of Edom, so that whoever is of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must follow in their path, for they have shown the way that their sons are to take at the End of Days, Abraham by descending to Egypt [Gen. 12], Isaac [by journey] to Abimelech [Gen. 26], and Jacob, the most excellent of the patriarchs, by leaving Beersheba and going to Haran [Gen. 28] [that is], by leaving the faith [of his fathers] and the Land of Israel for another realm of impurity, as is explained in the *Zohar*; for the *Zohar* explains that the redemption must be sought in the most evil place of all. Then he came to the mouth of the well [Gen. 29] and found Rachel and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and came to Laban and worked for him [in the realm of evil] and brought out his own portion. And afterward he went to Esau [Gen. 32], but he was still not done [with his task], for although he rolled the stone [from the well] they rolled it back again [Gen. 29:3], and therefore he could not go to Seir [the place where there are no laws] and all this was but to prepare the way for the last Jacob [Frank], the most perfect of all, at the End of Days. For as the *Zohar* explains, the first Jacob is perfect but the last Jacob is perfect in everything, and he will complete [Jacob's mission in] everything. And it is said [in allusion to this] in the *Zohar:* "Until a man comes in the form of Adam and a woman in the form of Eve and they circumvent him [i.e., the serpent] and outwit him," and so forth. Therefore, we must follow in his path, for "the ways of the Lord are right, and the just do walk in them" [Hos. 14:10], and though there is a burden of silence [about this] and the heart must not reveal [what it knows] to the mouth, it is nonetheless written [Isa. 42:16], "And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, in paths that they know not I will lead them, I will make darkness light before them and rugged places plain." And here it was that Jacob "honored his Master," and so forth [namely, by standing in the realm of evil]—and look in the *Zohar* [I, 161b, where these words are to be found]. And herein will be [found the mystical meaning of the verse] "Lord, when Thou didst go forth out of Seir, when Thou didst march out of the field of Edom" [Judg. 5:14] and "Who is this that cometh from Edom?" [Isa. 63:1], for as is [stated] in the *Tanna debe Eliyahu*, there will come a day when the angels will seek the Lord and the sea will say "He is not in me" and the abyss will say "He is not in me." Where then will they find him? In Edom, for it is said, "Who is this that cometh from Edom?" And they who follow him into this holy religion and cling to the House of Jacob [Frank] and take shelter in its shadow—for it is said [Lam. 4:20], "Under his shadow we shall live among the nations" and [Mic. 4:2] "Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and the House of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths"—to them it will be granted to cling to the Lord, for they [the ways of the Lord] are a way of life to those who find them. And it is written [Deut. 4:29], "From thence ye will seek the Lord thy God and thou shalt find Him." Why does the text emphasize "from thence"? Because light will be made known from darkness [*Zohar*, III, 47b], as it is written [Mic. 7:8], "Though I sit in darkness, the Lord is a light unto me."

The government officials who intercepted copies of this epistle rightly suspected its authors of being hidden revolutionaries, but for the wrong reason. The many obscure references to an individual called "Jacob" led them to surmise that they were in reality dealing with—the Jacobins, who in this manner were supposed to spread their radical propaganda among the Jews of the ghetto. An investigation was ordered on the spot. The authorities who conducted it in Frankfurt and Offenbach, however, did not delve beneath the surface of the affair and were quickly satisfied that it involved nothing more than an intrigue to swindle and extort money from ignorant Jews. In our own day, a historian who has published their official report, rather naively concludes by remarking, "and so the ridiculous theories of a Frankist plot which had proved so alarming to these imperial bureaucrats were at last laid to rest," thereby failing to realize himself that on a deeper level the authorities' suspicions were fully if unwittingly justified! Had they bothered to read and understand not just the debtors' notes of Frank's children in Offenbach which were in possession of the town's bankers and moneylenders, but also *The Prophecy of Isaiah* that had been composed within the four walls of the "court" itself, they would have been amazed to discover how ardently these Frankist "Jacobins" yearned for the overthrow of the existing regime.

THE HOPES and beliefs of these last Sabbatians caused them to be particularly susceptible to the "millennial" winds of the times. Even while still "believers"—in fact, precisely because they were "believers"—they had been drawing closer to the spirit of the Haskalah all along, so that when the flame of their faith finally flickered out they soon reappeared as leaders of Reform Judaism, secular intellectuals, or simply complete and indifferent skeptics. We have already noted how deeply rooted the Sabbatian apathy toward Orthodox observance and Jewish tradition in general was. Even the "moderates" tended to believe that the commandments were for the most part meant to be observed only in

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the Land of Israel and that "in the exile there is no punishment [for not observing them], even though there is still as always a reward [if they are kept]"—a doctrine that was ultimately to have a catastrophic effect on all traditional ties and to help prepare the way for the philosophy of assimilationism. A man such as Jonas Wehle, for example, the spiritual leader and educator of the Sabbatians in Prague after 1790, was equally appreciative of both Moses Mendelssohn and Sabbatai Zevi, and the fragments of his writings that have survived amply bear out the assertion of one of his opponents that "he took the teachings of the philosopher Kant and dressed them up in the costume of the *Zohar* and the Lurianic Kabbalah." It is evident from the commentary on the *En Ya'akov* and from the letters that were in Peter Beer's possession that men like Wehle intended to use the Haskalah for their own Sabbatian ends, but in the meanwhile the Haskalah went its way and proceeded to make use of them.

Indeed, even for those "believers" who remained faithful to their own religious world and did not share the enthusiasm of the Prague Frankists for the "School of Mendelssohn," the way to the Haskalah was easily traveled. It was surely no accident that a city like Prossnitz, which served as a center for the Haskalah in Moravia upon the movement's spread there one generation earlier, was also a bastion of Sabbatianism in that country. The leaders of the "School of Mendelssohn," who were neither Sabbatians themselves, of course, nor under the influence of mysticism at all, to say nothing of mystical heresy, found ready recruits for their cause in Sabbatian circles, where the world of rabbinic Judaism had already been completely destroyed from within, quite independently of the efforts of secularist criticism. Those who had survived the ruin were now open to any alternative or wind of change; and so, their "mad visions" behind them, they turned their energies and hidden desires for a more positive life to assimilation and the Haskalah, two forces that accomplished without paradoxes, indeed without religion at all, what they, the members of "the accursed sect," had earnestly striven for in a stormy contention with truth, carried on in the half-light of a faith pregnant with paradoxes.

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Crime & the Liberal Audience

James Q. Wilson

A FRENZIED and often acrimonious campaign seems to have produced election results that on the whole are moderate, conventional, and reasonable. Voters everywhere are without any question still concerned with what Scammon and Wattenberg call the "Social Issue"—crime, campus unrest, pornography, drugs, alienation—but for relatively few candidates did this issue seem to be the decisive one. Taxes and unemployment were obviously important, as well as the normal inclination to vote for attractive, personable candidates. Vice President Agnew's bitter attacks produced local enthusiasms but not a national mood. Wherever the two-party system is operating, the Center-seeking tendencies of politics seem to have been reasserted. Where there is no longer a two-party system, as in New York, more extreme candidates have won. The Liberal party made it possible for John Lindsay to remain Mayor over the opposition of a majority of the voters in 1969 and the Conservative party made it possible for James Buckley to become Senator over the opposition of a majority in 1970.

Though there are good grounds for optimism in the 1970 election returns, there is also the danger of drawing false inferences. One already being heard is that the "Social Issue" was a spurious one or that while it once existed it is no longer important. After all, some are saying, no one is in favor of crime or violence, except perhaps a few on the radical Left or Right; therefore, crime and violence are not really issues and the less said about them, the better. But no one is in favor of pollution, unsafe housing, unemployment, or high taxes either; does that mean that these problems are not really issues and the less said about them, the better? The lesson that should be drawn from the election results is that crime and disorder have perhaps ceased to be ideological issues and have begun to become practical issues—which is what they should have been all along.

In retrospect, the curious thing is that for so long one party, the Democratic, struck many voters as being indifferent to these concerns. Sensing this, the President and Vice President hit hard at the Social Issue, thinking that the advantage they had on this question outweighed the normal disadvantage any White House emissaries—from Franklin Roosevelt to the present—have had in trying to influence local elections. In most states, Democrats scrambled back to the political Center fast enough to prevent the one-issue attack of Mr. Agnew from having much effect. But the question remains, why did they vacate—or appear to vacate—the Center in the first place? For it is, after all, an axiom of American politics that ambition leads a candidate to occupy the Center on any issue. In Presidential elections, at least, there are few exceptions to that rule. Goldwater in 1964 was one, and he was crushed. George Wallace in 1968 was another, and he received only 13 per cent of the popular vote. Humphrey and Nixon, by contrast, sought the Center, the former hesitantly but loquaciously, the latter eagerly and with vague generalities.

The Center consisted then, and consists now, of people displaying deep confusion about the war, hoping somehow to end it without "losing" it, and a great (perhaps too great) certainty about the need to get tough on criminals, "welfare chiselers," disruptive college students, and the purveyors of obscenity. As a backdrop to the overriding issues of war and civility can be found an enduring—and on the whole not too begrudging—willingness to see public money spent in rather large amounts to improve education, end poverty, and extend medical care.

The clear emergence of the Social Issue may be dated from May 1965, when the Gallup Poll showed for the first time that "crime" (along with education) was viewed by Americans as the most important problem facing the nation. More careful surveys done over the next two years, some under the sponsorship of the President's Crime Commission, confirmed and amplified this finding. At about that time I happened to be supervising a survey in Boston, and I noted a striking fact: when asked what was the biggest problem facing large cities, *Negro* respondents were more likely to mention crime and juvenile delinquency than any other issue. Most whites agreed with them, though Italians and Poles put "the Negro problem" slightly ahead of lawlessness. It struck me that "crime in the streets" could not be simply a codeword for anti-black feeling if blacks themselves were voicing it.

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In the months leading up to the Democratic National Convention in 1968—specifically, in February, May, and August—Gallup continued to report crime as the most important issue, now accompanied by Vietnam and the high cost of living. Not only was the crime issue important to millions of voters, most of the voters who were the victims of street crime were Democrats—Negroes, poor whites living in big cities, and upper-middle-class Jewish professionals living in midtown Manhattan. By contrast, Orange County suburbanites who complained a lot about crime rarely experienced it and would vote Republican anyway. Furthermore, crime—unlike Vietnam and inflation—was not an issue for which the Democrats had to explain away their part in causing it. The President may have sent troops to Vietnam, but he had not sent muggers to East 67th Street; he may have overheated the economy, but he had not opened the prison gates. One would naturally suppose that, at the convention, much would be made of the crime issue.

One's natural guess would have been wrong. To be sure, the keynote speaker deplored crime and the platform called for implementing the Crime Commission recommendations. More revealing was the conduct of what some might have thought to be the two major interest groups speaking for the problems of urban America—the AFL-CIO, representing labor, and the Urban Coalition, attempting (in vain) to represent everybody else. Both organizations presented elaborate statements to the platform committee. *Crime was mentioned only in passing, and though many proposals were made on all other aspects of urban life, none was made in the area of criminal justice.* The Attorney General of the United States, Ramsey Clark, was quoted as saying, no doubt in an unguarded moment, that he did not think the United States was having a crime wave at all.

In the actual campaigning, individual candidates began to sense the importance of this and related issues. Robert Kennedy, speaking in the closing days of the Indiana primary, had given major emphasis to his opposition to crime and his desire to find a way to put welfare recipients to work. Hubert Humphrey, after his nomination, issued a lengthy statement on what was now rechristened "order and justice." Eugene McCarthy, as far as anyone can tell, never sensed the issue at all.

After Humphrey's defeat, the center of activity—if not of votes—within the Democratic National Committee and its allied policy groups became expressive of the New Politics and the determination of those gifted at it to carve out a position for the Democratic party in left field—literally and figuratively. It is of course normal for the party out of power to acquire as spokesmen those at the ideological extreme; at the game of being against the incumbent administration, any number can play and those most willing to play without remuneration are usually those ideologically most highly committed.

Meanwhile, those who aspired to hold office were paying a heavy price for being caught on the wrong side of a major issue. An attractive black candidate could not beat an undistinguished Los Angeles mayor; in losing, Thomas Bradley could not manage to win the large majorities usually available to liberals in the Jewish precincts. A law-and-order mayor won in Minneapolis with almost no credentials but his position on crime. Another law-and-order candidate was beaten in Detroit, but only, it would appear, because she had the misfortune to run against a Polish ex-sheriff (who turned out to be a "moderate" on the police issue). And John Lindsay—the liberal mayor of the most liberal city in the nation—"won" reelection only because it was a three-man race. As Scammon and Wattenberg put it: what kind of would-be national Democratic politician is it who can carry, in his own city, only a quarter of the votes of the white working class and less than half the votes of the Jews?

THE MAJOR PROBLEM facing anyone seeking to give an account of party politics in the 1960's is why a party with which a majority of the voters identify, confronting an issue of great practical importance to its own rank and file and of great symbolic importance to everyone else, and in a position to take the initiative rather than defend a record, chose to display itself in a manner leading millions of its own followers to think of it as wrong. If Vietnam was a divisive issue and the Social Issue a unifying one, why did the Democratic party preoccupy itself with the former and neglect the latter?

One explanation requires the assumption that Democratic politicians are nobler than others. In this view, the war is a much more important matter than crime and disorder and alienation; until it is ended, nothing can be done about these other questions. Even though winning a national election is easier if one has a clear position on the Social Issue, we choose to direct our attention to a more divisive issue. There are many people who believe this, and some are Democratic party leaders. Some—a very few—are even prepared to risk their political careers because of this belief. But rare and noble sentiments cannot usually explain the actions of more than rare and noble persons, especially if the rejoinder can be made that whatever one wishes to accomplish in public affairs one must first win office. The general rule is—find a majority, and then lead it; for some today, the rule seems to be—find a minority, and follow it.

Another possible explanation is that there are several persons who have won, and sometimes won resoundingly, with a strong dove position on the war and with very little else by way of platform. If some can do it, many can. Perhaps. No

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doubt districts where that is possible exist, possibly more than anyone suspects. But it is important to be sure that one is running in such a district before adopting a position that ignores the Social Issue. There are such districts in suburban Boston; Father Drinan was nominated and elected in one. There are no such districts in Boston itself; there, Louise Day Hicks was nominated and then elected. The nation as a whole is not such a district.

A third—and to me more important—explanation is that while the forces impelling the major parties to move toward the Center at the time of a national Presidential election are as strong as ever, the forces impelling them to move away from the Center between those elections have become in recent years almost equally strong. As long as the chief prize of politics is the Presidency and as long as there are for all practical purposes only two contenders for that prize, finding and moving toward the Center is the inevitable strategy of each contender. But during the three-and-a-half years when no Presidential contest is underway, the parties must decide to which of many competing internal pressures they will respond. Increasingly, those internal pressures—in both parties, but especially the Democratic—have led key party figures to occupy positions far from the Center.

Chief among these internal forces are those exerted by persons whose *volunteer* contributions to the party are deemed essential and whose esteem is deemed worth winning. For the Democrats, these persons include activist professors whose advice—and more important, whose blessing—is valued; friendly syndicated columnists and key editors and reporters in the "national" press (the New York *Times,* the Washington *Post, Newsweek,* etc.) from whom the assurance of sympathetic treatment must be won; wealthy individuals, mostly in New York (and some in Los Angeles), who are prepared to give substantial sums even to unlikely, high-risk candidates if they feel strongly enough about "the issues"; and volunteer workers, some organized into political clubs, others available on an *ad hoc* basis for individual campaign organizations when and if they find those individuals attractive.

Some may see in this nothing more than a rehash of familiar charges about the "Eastern Liberal Establishment" that "dictates" policies and "selects" candidates. But this simplistic view is quite inadequate, both in suggesting a level of agreement on issues that does not exist and in failing to explain why so few people can wield so much influence over supposedly canny professional politicians. There is in fact nothing conspiratorial at all about the sources of liberalism in the Democratic party, just as there is nothing spooky or pathological about the sources (and influence) of Goldwater-Reagan conservatism in the Republican.

Between elections "the party" hardly exists except as a label. Between elections, the political process, especially among those not in national office, consists in great measure of engaging in a partly competitive, partly cooperative struggle to marshal or husband valued political resources—visibility, reputation, allies, money, followers. The net effect of this struggle at any point in time is measured in terms of the "standing" of various political figures, that standing being a composite of "soundness," "style," and "appeal." Increasingly, the standing is judged in terms of ideas and in this way ideas tend to have consequences. Ideas in American politics usually do not affect the course of events because masses of people are persuaded of them (though that sometimes happens—an "idea whose time has come") but because to a great extent the standing of individual politicians has been allocated in terms of the ideas (as well as style and appeal) valued by the attentive audience of those politicians; the good reputation of the politicians, in turn, is communicated to millions of citizens, not so much in terms of statements that say "Senator Jones is a good man because of his position on poverty" but rather in the form of ones that say "Senator Jones is a good man because he *has* a position on poverty," or better yet, "Senator Jones cares" or is "concerned." "Caring"—empathy—is the vulgar expression of ideology, where ideology exists. Sometimes empathy is an expression of nothing at all.

II

THE INFLUENCE of this attentive audience increased during the 1960's in both political parties, but particularly in the Democratic. And the attentive Democratic audience is a liberal one, made up of volunteers and part-time public servants with discretionary money to spend, personal style to display, campaign skills to use, "interesting ideas" to propound, and influence in the mass media to wield. The importance of the members of the Liberal Audience has grown as the power and cohesiveness of the political party at the local level declined; as the bright young millionaires created by the boom of the 60's became interested in applying their social conscience to politics; as television acquired a power to bless or curse formerly reserved to archbishops; as organized labor came to be scorned for its "middle-class values" (though courted for its working-class money); and as key posts in city halls, federal agencies, and even the White House were filled with brilliant young men fresh out of law school or sometimes even fresher out of college. To a substantial degree, at least on the East Coast, Democratic politics when the party is out of power occurs within this group and the several communications nets linking it.

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To some extent a comparable process was underway in the Republican party, at least in 1964. The nomination of Goldwater was a triumph of the volunteer spirit among Republicans and exceedingly pleasing to those conservative intellectuals and fund-givers who had long chafed under the Center-seeking tendencies of the party, a process they liked to call "me-too-ism." But the difference between what happened in 1964 to the Republicans and what happened in 1965-70 to the Democrats is that the rise of amateur politics among the Republicans was led and symbolized by one man who was an active candidate; the high-water mark of conservative ideology was his nomination and the low-water mark his defeat. With Goldwater's loss, those identified with him were at a profound disadvantage in the party; many, indeed, became more interested in Governor Reagan in California. But amateur politics in the Democratic party was not identified with or led by any single candidate; indeed, to a considerable degree the movement took strength from its opposition to the party's leader, President Johnson. To the extent that the Liberal Audience identified with any political figures, *none of those it identified with ever lost a national election*: McCarthy could not win the nomination, Robert Kennedy was murdered, George McGovern was never a serious contender, and Ramsey Clark has not even entered electoral politics as yet.

The rise in importance of the Liberal Audience was thus never checked by electoral realities. The rise itself, however, cannot be explained merely in terms of a change in the distribution of political resources. To be sure, the television medium is more powerful than before, idea-men are in demand, and fund-givers for high-risk candidates are valued. But all this might not have produced the extraordinary shift in the Democratic party's center of gravity had it not been for other processes that were also at work. The most significant of these changes was the loss of political and moral authority by the old sources of party leadership. As late as 1960 Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago was held in high esteem by many liberals, not simply because he was an effective mayor but because he had helped nominate Adlai Stevenson in 1956 and John F. Kennedy in 1960. Kennedy became President of the United States because old-line party bosses gave him the nomination and helped give him the election (anyone who doubts the latter statement need only recall the long delay in the Chicago returns in that November of 1960 when the outcome depended almost entirely on the Illinois electoral votes).

The voters at large were increasingly suspicious of party "bosses," finding men who practiced politics out of self-interest or in ways that catered to the particular self-interest of others distasteful. The chic of the Kennedy administration did not cause this change, but it did help it along—Daley might get a few laughs welcoming Queen Elizabeth to Chicago but no one could imagine inviting him to the White House to hear Pablo Casals. Thus long before Daley's police hit anybody in Grant Park, it seemed to many that to govern the nation in the 1960's it was more important to understand "fiscal drag" and "second-strike capability" and "counter-insurgency warfare" (or at least be able to mention them knowingly; very few really understood those phrases) than it was to tend to what party leaders were saying. In the first place they seemed to be saying irrelevant or out-of-date things; in the second place they didn't say them very grammatically; in the third place "everybody knew" their days were numbered; in the fourth place the federal government, through various anti-poverty programs, was going to build a rival and more enduring political structure in the big cities; in the fifth place the federal government was going to "bypass" the states (and thus state party structures) and deal directly with urban problems; and in the sixth place, and perhaps most important, the party bosses were not very good when it came to dealing with blacks.

And they weren't. A party is an aggregation of interests; a party leader is a man who maintains the aggregation. Men who build coalitions or maintain aggregations tend not to emphasize larger principles, especially those that will divide the coalition. Men who are good horse traders rarely clarify or advance the rule of law. Reasons one through five in the preceding paragraph might explain the decline in the political authority of party leaders; the sixth reason explains their decline in moral authority.

BUT WHERE would new party leadership on matters of race come from? And what would it do? The central problem, apparent only in retrospect, was that if the party leaders seemed to lack the moral authority to deal with the black question, the Liberal Audience—an elitist group rooted in the upper middle class—lacked the knowledge. There were three sources of knowledge about blacks—census data, militant black spokesmen, and slum romanticism. A few first-hand studies existed, but not many. The economists, but few others, paid great attention to the census data. Militant blacks and slum romantics quickly found they could agree on rather little—blacks were beginning to object to whites who thought they "understood the Negro" —but on one principle they could agree: there was no "Negro problem," there was only a "white problem." It was not until the Kerner Commission that this doctrine received the imprimatur of a Presidential agency, but it was the operating doctrine long before it was set in type by the Government Printing Office.

To a great extent, this doctrine was an advance. It repudiated Southern racist notions of

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white supremacy; it forced on one's consciousness the realization that race was a national responsibility; and it directed attention toward the need for a change in white attitudes and white practices without waiting for blacks to be "ready" for the change. The doctrine also conferred some political advantages in intra-party struggle: it was an explicit rejection of the old-line party leaders' private views that Negroes were like any other ethnic group, except with less gumption, and should be treated accordingly.

But there were costs to this doctrine. One, relevant to the argument here, is that it became impossible to construct a political strategy that rested on finding what problems blacks and whites had in common. Politics, under the "white racism" doctrine, became a zero-sum game—anything blacks win, whites must lose, and vice versa. There are some problems like that, but there are others that are not. Crime is one.

The fact that blacks commit a disproportionate share of certain crimes (not by any means of all crimes) led those who spoke for or about blacks in the 1960's either to deny the fact ("we all know crime statistics are inaccurate"), to explain it as the result of a discriminatory police system ("they pick on blacks"), or to argue that blacks are driven to it by poverty and segregation ("they can't get a job legally so they must earn money illegally"). Now, there is some truth in all of these points, but only some; taken as a full account of the matter they are seriously inadequate. A different perspective on crime, one easily available to a person of reasonable sense who lived in the ghetto, was that no matter who was *committing* crimes, the *victims* were disproportionately blacks and whites in the inner city, that police protection was inadequate, and that more efficient (and fairer) deterrence and apprehension systems were immediate needs. Here, as with many social problems, it is necessary to deal with symptoms before one can deal with causes.

THE TRANSFER of moral and political authority from one segment of the party to another and the effort to provide vicarious leadership on the race issue, taken together with the question of peace, were enough to insure that not only would the political resources of the Liberal Audience be courted, but that its views would be taken seriously as well. But adding moral authority to political resources meant that the Liberal Audience became encapsulated—it acquired a sense of being self-sufficient, without need of any political infrastructure, capable of operating (it thought) a government based on talent defined as facility with ideas, and disdainful of traditional sources of Democratic votes (except for an idealized conception of blacks).

Encapsulation in turn facilitated a general philosophical shift in the nature of liberal opinion. Liberalism arose in the 19th century as a group of ideas opposed to despotic authority, and consisted chiefly of the rule of law, representative government, and civil liberties. To this came to be added an equally strong concern for advancing welfare and social amelioration. Both sets of ideas had essentially utilitarian justifications—society would be "better off" if government respected personal liberty and advanced social welfare. Since the advent of the New Deal, and especially since the Supreme Court began after 1936 to vote to support welfare measures, the procedural elements of the liberal creed have steadily been lost sight of or taken for granted. McCarthyism briefly called forth their reassertion, but that is now a generation past. The growing preoccupation with social welfare, and the apparent ease with which American society seemed to hold together and the democratic process seemed to work, made many liberals almost entirely result-oriented. Programs and ideas were to be judged by the extent to which they conferred benefits on particular groups of people. It was assumed, of course, that the law would be obeyed.

This shift changed the central tendency of liberalism from a commitment to certain ideas to the manifestation of "concern" or empathy for certain worthy others. There was little wrong and much that was generous and decent about this impulse, but it increasingly left liberals unprepared for the day when the law would no longer be obeyed and personal liberty no longer respected. Reverting to a defense of liberty and of constitutional processes might have been easy if the attack on the law had come from "unworthy" sources, but the attack in fact came from "worthy" ones—chiefly the young.

Empathy (though not outright approval) governed the liberal response to urban riots and campus disorders; rage governed its response to police misconduct and violence from construction workers. Instead of reasserting fundamental liberal principles—the right of free speech and free assembly and the obligation of all to obey the law in a democratic society—many liberals tended to call for dealing with youthful disorders by "eliminating the causes" and hard-hat or police disorders by "enforcing the law." There is nothing wrong with taking sides in political issues, but there is something wrong with allowing essential principles to be so far lost sight of that these issues are exploited to the detriment of all concerned.

It is my view, and I think the view of many, that the campus unrest issue should not have become a political issue. When government, as in this case, can do almost nothing about a problem without destroying the institutions it seeks to protect, it should resist having the problem placed on its agenda. For the internal affairs of voluntary associations to become the subject of political debate and action would be to weaken further the

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distinction between what is public and what is private that is essential to a liberal society. Yet for the matter to stay off the agenda it is necessary that it be neutralized as an issue, and this requires the early and firm assertion by all parties of agreed-upon principles and, on the part of the universities, their consistent application. The American public might not have been mollified if university authorities had reasserted their commitment to free discussion and their determination to use their powers of exclusion to protect free inquiry from the tyranny of minority acts of coercion and harassment, but at least such commitments would have made it easier to repudiate politicians who sought to exploit the campus issue for partisan and personal advantage.

Essentially, liberalism is in part a notion of *how* government should legitimately proceed. If liberals abandon that entirely in favor of choosing sides over who should benefit from government, then they lose their moral authority in the nation as a whole, even though they temporarily may increase their political ascendancy in one party.

III

The Liberal Audience is frequently torn asunder by the most bitter internal divisions. Members in good standing were barely speaking to each other over whether or not Robert F. Kennedy should run for the New York Senate seat then held by Kenneth Keating; they were later divided into two openly warring camps over the competing claims of Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy for the Presidential nomination; in 1970 they divided again over Goodell versus Ottinger. (The Liberal Audience is not identical with what is sometimes called the New Politics; New Politicians are only one of its wings.) But whatever the differences, between elections, national leaders and would-be leaders of the Democratic party are heavily affected by their desire to win the support of that Audience and the Audience itself is under heavy pressure to award support on the basis of what its "Left"-most branches believe.

It is not hard to see why the Left edge of the Liberal Audience should exercise disproportionate influence. Partly it is simply a case of the most committed being willing to work harder. But more importantly it is a matter of the Left, within the Audience, seeming to have moral superiority. It was the Left, after all, that was calling for an end to the war at a time when the more established, in-and-out-of-government Audience members were merely calling for an end to the bombing of North Vietnam. After Cambodia, the Establishment types decided, with great embarrassment, that they, too, wanted all the way out of Vietnam. The Left then seemed to have been correct all along.

Above all, the Left is committed to change, innovation, and the redistribution of authority and resources; responding to the Social Issue, on the other hand, seems to require one to favor order and stability. This placed the non-Left members of the Audience at a hopeless disadvantage. How could they appear to favor cops and college presidents? That was not in fact the only alternative, but when a man feels himself at a moral disadvantage, his capacity to think clearly is seriously attenuated. Never mind that anti-poverty programs won't work as long as crime and heroin addiction are ravaging the ghetto; never mind that liberalism itself springs in no small measure from those universities victimized by a small group of persons practicing totalitarian politics; never mind that a cornerstone of liberalism—freedom of expression—was in genuine jeopardy, not at street-corner soap boxes but in the classroom itself. Never mind, in short, that there was something worth conserving.

Lyndon Johnson never had a chance with this Audience and increasingly (to his deep frustration) neither did Hubert Humphrey. The reasons for this are many, not the least of which were manner and style. But in the late 1960's, unlike the late 1950's, the Liberal Audience came to assign reputations (again, I stress, more or less spontaneously; there really aren't any Chief Image-Makers in this group) on the basis of one or two overriding issues—race and war. It was no longer enough to be personable, slightly intellectual, and vaguely liberal; it was essential that one identify with the new civil-rights movement and with a skeptical posture on Vietnam. Almost any previous transgression or present occupation could be forgiven a person who was "right" on these matters. Prior service as an employee of Senator Joseph McCarthy could be overlooked if one now struggled effectively against Vietnam. Holding office in the Johnson administration could be tolerated if by public hint or private disclaimer one showed oneself unhappy, restless, or doubting.

Given the importance they attached to these issues, for the persons who allocate reputations among Democrats to behave in this manner was both rational and proper. Given, on the other hand, a wish to win the Presidency, the behavior, while laudatory, was irrational.

The last point requires some evidence. After all, did not Eugene McCarthy, whose posture on the war was "correct," beat President Johnson in the New Hampshire primary, and beat him on the war issue? The answer to both questions is "no." The Scammon and Wattenberg review of 1968 primaries is an especially useful feature of their book. The President won the preference primary though his name was not on the ballot and McCarthy's was. Furthermore, a poll showed that three out of five McCarthy voters in New Hampshire thought the Johnson administration was not "hawkish" enough on Vietnam. Wiscon-

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sin was a different story—McCarthy beat Johnson in a head-on contest with both names on the ballot. How much of his victory was on the war issue and how much on other issues is unclear (the voters in Madison, Wisconsin, in that election defeated an anti-war referendum issue at the same time as they were going heavily for McCarthy), and how representative of the nation Wisconsin may be is questionable (a Gallup Poll showed, at the time of the primary, Johnson preferred to McCarthy among Democratic voters in the nation as a whole, 59 per cent to 29 per cent).

But whatever the political, as opposed to moral, value of an anti-war position, it is hard to imagine anyone winning a nomination and running a Presidential campaign on that issue alone. And yet no active and imaginative concern for any other issue, excepting poverty/race, emerged. The crime issue in particular was either ignored or rejected—partly because for much of the Liberal Audience "crime" was a synonym for anti-black feelings, partly because it was Barry Goldwater who had injected "crime in the streets" into the political dialogue, and partly because the behavior of the Chicago police at the Democratic convention made it impossible for anyone to retain his standing with the Liberal Audience if his statements about the police in general were anything but critical.

But on both substantive and tactical grounds, these reasons for downplaying the issue were inadequate. Tactically, *some* affirmative and constructive response had to be made to those voters, constituting not only a clear majority of the national electorate but even a clear majority of the "dove" vote, who thought the police, not the students, were right. As the University of Michigan Survey Research Center has shown, 70 per cent of all white voters with a clearly "dove" position on Vietnam in 1968 denied that the Chicago police used too much force and 40 per cent thought they had used too little. Only 12 per cent of the clearly dove voters in 1968 voiced extreme sympathy for "Vietnam war protesters," and they were, predictably, the very young, college-educated, urban voters.

If one grants that tactically a strong position on crime and disorder was expedient, was there any such position to be taken that was reasonable, morally defensible, and coherent? Or was the only position to take one that was blindly "pro-cop" and that played on sentiments of vengeance and repression? I think there was such a position, defensible by liberal standards, that would have addressed predatory crime, urban violence, and campus disorder; at the time, I found few people who agreed with me. Even to speak of those things, to say nothing of speaking of them critically, was to "turn Right," to be a "backlasher," to "go after the Wallace vote," and so on. It almost literally became a mark of one's acceptability as a liberal that one would have nothing to do with any of these issues except to say that the "only" cure for rioting and crime was to "solve the underlying problems of poverty and racism" and the "only" way to prevent campus disorder was to "end the war." Such a view as this was not only politically disastrous, it was simply wrong.

This is not the place to state in any detail what a responsible position could have been, but some essential elements can be outlined. With respect to crime, a liberal position would have rested on the following assertions which I believe are accurate: First, the rise in the rate of predatory crime—especially "street crime"—has been real and dramatic and is neither a statistical artifact nor an FBI public-relations stunt; second, blacks and whites alike are the victims of these crimes (blacks more than whites), and thus blacks and whites alike have a common interest in their control; third, the increase came concurrently with a general rise in the standard of living and thus cannot be explained by worsening social conditions; fourth, though continued improvements in prosperity and in ending discrimination may ultimately be the best remedies for crime, in the short term (anything less than the next generation or two) society's efforts must be aimed at improving the criminal justice system as a mechanism for just and effective social control; fifth, any such improvements must focus as much on the criminal courts and the correctional system as on the police because these institutions are failing to deal with persons already identified as criminal repeaters; and sixth, there must be a massive effort to cut off the flow of heroin into this country and to extend the use of chemical alternatives to heroin addiction.

To some readers, these points will seem self-evident. For their benefit let me recount what I have typically heard as the alternative, "liberal" position: The rise in crime is illusory or exaggerated; whites are using the crime issue as a way of expressing racist sentiments; if there is a real increase in crime, only remedying the underlying social causes with bigger expenditures on poverty programs will make any real difference; the overriding need in dealing with the criminal justice system is to make it fairer, not to make it more effective; and much so-called "crime" would be eliminated if we did not "over-criminalize" behavior by making public intoxication and the sale of marijuana illegal.

I think it can be shown that each one of those propositions is either factually wrong or seriously misleading. And I think there can be no doubt that by taking those positions liberals have abdicated to the Right. What should have been a strong liberal position ("we must make all persons free from both the fear of violence and the fear of want") became instead a conservative position ("we must stamp out crime and deviant

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behavior by whatever means necessary"). In 1964 the Republicans gingerly and unsystematically spoke of "crime in the streets," but at that time they seemed to mean black riots (a serious but transient problem, already much reduced in importance) as much or more than individual predatory crime. By 1970, the Republicans, in the person of Vice President Agnew, virtually owned the issue. Having acquired title, however, they have generally confined themselves to making campaign hay out of it with rather little substantively to show for their concern except a rhetorical preoccupation with retaining the death penalty (a barbaric practice, utterly unrelated to the deterrence of most predatory crime) and a good deal of name-calling. Indeed, I suspect the Vice President, because of the default of liberal Democrats and his own oratorical skill, may have led the Republicans themselves into a blind alley, making a divisive issue out of what could be, if properly handled, a unifying one. The Democrats, having abandoned the Center in the 1960's, have encouraged a Vice President who didn't recognize the Center when he saw it.

BECAUSE OF THIS, members of the Liberal Audience (though no longer so many liberal politicians) had a facile argument for resisting a serious position on crime. Joseph Kraft, in a recent issue of *New York* magazine, implied it would be unthinkable and said it would be unnecessary for liberal Democrats to try to "out-Agnew Agnew." To Kraft—the man who put the term "Middle America" into our vocabulary—"the disorder issue can be skirted or muted by personal appeal and stress on local needs such as pollution or housing." Liberal Democrats must rest their hopes on finding glamorous candidates whose style and charm will make it possible to "skirt or mute" the issues, except pollution (which is a non-issue, since no one is in favor of pollution) and housing (where the records of Republican and Democratic administrations are virtually indistinguishable). To say that charm and motherhood issues are the only alternatives to trying to "out-Agnew Agnew" is to misunderstand, fundamentally and tragically, both the needs and the mood of the electorate. Kraft must have forgotten what happened only a year ago to the most charming and appealing candidate in the most liberal city in America—John V. Lindsay.

In fairness to Kraft and others who think that the Social Issue can be downplayed, congressional and senatorial candidates may often be able to skirt or mute it. Voters know that the Congress doesn't have much to do with local systems of criminal justice, and in any case the level of popular information about what a congressional candidate says, as opposed to what he sounds and looks like, is not very high. Furthermore, there are other popular concerns—unemployment, inflation, taxes. Mayors and Presidents, on the other hand, have less freedom of action—the former because they are supposed to take charge of urban problems, the latter because they are supposed to symbolize and articulate the deepest and most pressing concerns of citizens no matter what the actual locus of those concerns. To act otherwise—to concede the Social Issue to Agnew—is to practice the politics of illusion.

Things are changing, however. When illusion impedes the realization of ambitions, it is the former, not the latter, that is abandoned. Hubert Humphrey, to the consternation of Kraft, made crime a major issue in winning the Minnesota primary. Five years after the issue surfaced, liberal candidates in most 1970 races seemed to take crime seriously. New York City candidates outdid each other in their expressions of concern over narcotics. Enough expensive midtown Manhattan apartments have been burglarized of late to reduce the tendency of their occupants to dismiss talk of crime as mere "backlash." Indeed, the same issue of *New York* containing Kraft's professions of dislike for going "hard" on law and order had, as its cover story, an article entitled "A Nervous New Yorker's Guide to Safety Devices," offering a careful evaluation of the cost and effectiveness of various gadgets for "home defense" against burglary.

Reality has a way of intruding. But only part way. The upper-middle classes are themselves touched by the issue and their candidates are now responding to it, but only, one suspects, as an inconvenience to be overcome. The Liberal Audience, after all, can protect itself very easily—move to the suburbs, or buy a $900 Detectron System, featuring a "radar sensor and perimeter control, incredibly sensitive and effective." But most blacks in Harlem cannot move to the suburbs and most whites in Queens cannot afford the Detectron System. Self-interest overcomes ideology only when people have no other alternative.

The decline of illusion is not the same thing as the rise of commitment. Taking crime seriously is desirable and, increasingly, that is happening. Defusing crime as an ideological issue is helpful. But giving to the courts and the correctional system the attention, and to their improvement the priority, necessary for major changes to occur is not yet forthcoming. When, for example, delays in the criminal courts are attended to with the same sense of drama and outrage that can be aroused by rats in a tenement, we will be getting the beginnings of real commitment.

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Land Without Jews

Herbert Gold

THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI was a land without Jews except in myth and memory. There was no congregation and no cemetery, but there were a few visitors. There were some visiting American Jews, two Israelis. There was no community, no rabbi, no shared life—this lack was nothing strange to me. I had lived all my life with no Jewish community, no Jewish leadership except habits dimly revealed in my family, no religious life. These habits, and their presence in my father and mother, must have given me the connection with the past we all need to survive. My father was a man mysterious to me, though reconciliation is a kind of understanding and we reconciled. An avenue of blood was my link with history, and as I came back to him in time, I also go forward with my children into the history of the future.

The barrenness of history without connection became as demanding as hunger or thirst. In Haiti I began to search for the Jew in myself, and it began as something little more than a fantastic paradox—to find Jews in the land without Jews. Even in this desolate Caribbean island, suffering from so much poverty and isolation, its Christianity smudged over by voodoo, there remained an imagination of Jews; for me and, as I learned, for others.

In the rank, oily harbor of Port-au-Prince glistening black boys dived for coins, frantically turning like playful dolphins for the pleasure of the tour ships. The smoke of charcoal fires lay over the white heap of a city built on hills like Naples, Haifa, and San Francisco. The lizards played up walls and across ceilings, darting after flies. Beneath the surface, the town was sleepily insomniac, drinking coffee and rum-cola to stay awake, but to see it as a tourist was to see frantic commerce, subtle sexual gaming, a struggle to stay alive and feel vivid in the heat.

What was I doing in Haiti? The traditional or curriculum-vitae answer would be: interested in the meeting of France and Africa, lecturing about literature under U.S. study grant. The oedipal or psychoanalytic answer would be: bored with marriage, desiring to break the habit of suburbia, wishing to ease wife's spirit by providing distraction and cheap servants. The deepest answer is that my childhood dreams are always with me. *I can fly. I can find perfect love. I can do what I choose to do, be what I choose to be.* In the hunt for buried treasure (in which I nearly died of malarial jaundice), in adventures among white magic, black magic, and harsh strangers, I could discover the possibilities of that harsh stranger which was my self. And following along, grinning at me with big teeth, was the devil of a question from my earliest childhood: What is a Jew and why am I this thing?

Stand far from it, stand close. No matter; answer the question. I sought the answer along with power, love, and riches. Those things would do until the truth came along.

I shipped out as a scholar assigned to the Université d'Haiti. The school of music in those days of 1954 consisted of one professor, a Cuban guitarist whose sister was the *"petite amie"* of the Président de la République. The university was a complex of termite-ridden wooden buildings, barracks, and gingerbread houses, but Haiti had an adequate medical school and of course the usual crowded school of law required by French tradition. There was a steady stream of anthropologists come to study voodoo, village culture, and the marketing system. In the countryside, another synonym for white man was *"anthropologue,"* just as a Haitian educated abroad was known in Creole as *"oun masters-of,"* indicating that he was no doubt a Master of Something-or-other from Columbia University. I happened to be a white master-of.

Haiti divided the peoples of the world into three races—black, mulatto, and white. An occasional Oriental visitor was just another rich white man. The real and practical social discord, between black and mulatto, was oddly played against an abstract historical world warfare between Haiti and everyone else outside. A few Haitians believed, as did one of my friends among the coffee-drinkers of the Cénacle des Philosophes in the village of Kenscoff: "Haiti is the third force. After the United States and Russia destroy civilization, Haiti will make peace between them."

"Ah!" said Monsieur Bonfils, single pedagogical finger uplifted. "Perhaps with the aid of China!"

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I discovered an odd new condition in Haiti. I was first of all a white man without qualification. Coddled or resented, teased or accepted, I was a member of the group called *"blancs,"* a name which included all foreigners. Nothing is pure on this earth, of course, and even black Americans—foreign is dominant—were commonly called *"blancs."* And a rich black Haitian was often transformed by Haitian optical nerves into a mulatto or a *"griffon"* or one of the hundred-odd other classifications for someone with mixed blood and complicated skin, nose, hair, lips. And money.

The dentist, the market woman, the Haitian bureaucrats were missing something in their definition of me as white like all other whites. But there was no Jewish community, no Jewish life. Even the most primary and final sign of Jewish history, as of all histories, was lacking—no Jewish cemetery, no Jewish place in a cemetery. A Jew might run and hide, history is full of that, but the cemetery remains, or the place where the cemetery once stood, or the memory of that place. None. No graveyard, no place, no memory of a place which never was. And yet, as it happened, even here, in this lovely, forsaken corner of the world, Jews had come out of hope, desperation, and in one case at least, perhaps simple curiosity.

Before I found the traces of Jewry, I found the anti-Semites, refugees from their crimes, a Gestapo informer from Paris who became my good friend and companion ("Get me into the States, can't you? Surely *you* can!"), and a Pétainist colonel in exile. Odd to meet the evidence of my own history first in the form of its enemy, the fascist exiles biting their nails, biding their time in a backwater of time. And then I found Haitians like my friend Jean Berlin, a handsome engineer and traveler, tall as a Watusi, with a cackling hysterical laugh when he described the origin of his distinguished Roman Catholic family: "Berlin! A Jew from Berlin came here to trade in coffee! He left a family of brown coffee merchants in Jacmel, in Jeremie, and another wife here in Port-au-Prince, and now *Bairlin* is a fine old Gallic name for a family *croyant et bien-pensant,* all of us married in the cathedral. I'm the only one who tells the truth, my friend."

He knew nothing of being Jewish except that his rebellion against the conservative old family consisted in saying. Yes I am. *I am!* As sign of the double view of knowledge he urged his son to convert—"Too late for me," he said—to Protestantism.

Through my friend Berlin I met an accountant, a morose black man with a degree from a school of business in Philadelphia and a mania for recounting the days of his persecution there. Restaurants, doormen, professors, women had all treated him like a *Negro—"Moi qui est Haitien!"* he cried. Except in the purgatory of Philadelphia, he despised Haiti, the peasantry, and the Jews; and his name was Cohen. When he confided one evening that the Jews are at the root of all the trouble in Haiti and the world, I said to him what an American or a European would have known without being told: I am a Jew. He looked at me blankly through his red-rimmed eyes, as if he had never seen one before. "And you, with your name," I said.

"My grandfather came from Jamaica!" he shouted.

"You must have had a Jewish grandfather in there someplace," I said.

"You're making that up! . . . How did you know?"

"Cohen."

"Cohen?" he asked. To him Cohen was the name of a Catholic Haitian accountant. I explained that the Cohanim were priests and he was descended from priests and princes.

"Priests don't have children," he said irritably.

"Do you really think Jews caused all the trouble in Haiti?" I asked.

"No, not all," he said, "but the wars, the world wars, they touch us, too."

There was a secret black ledger between his consciousness that he had a Jewish ancestor and his desire to provide an explanation for trouble and sin in the world. I could torture him with facts, brutalize him with my own history, but I could never change his accounting and put Cohen, the Haitian accountant, in touch with Cohen, the man with an ancestor who did not start the line in Jamaica. He had horn-rimmed glasses, owlish eyes with reddened conjunctiva, pock-marked black skin, and a Jew-hating heart which was only stopped a moment from its need by the information, which he knew already, that his name meant something grave in his past. He was not descended from an infinite line of Jamaican mulattoes. Someplace back there in the accountant's genes wandered a Jew.

"Priests don't have children," he mumbled, "but of course princes do. That's just a theory you have, however. I studied the Jews very carefully in Jamaica and Philadelphia."

"If you knew more about the troubles of the world," I told him, "you'd be safer from them."

"J'en ai eu, des difficultés."

"Try to learn what they come from."

Not safe, but safer. I didn't add the *maybe* which would only confuse a black Roman Catholic Cohen in search of clear definitions.

There were others like him, of course, good Mass-going Haitians with names like Goldenberg or Weiner or with Sephardic names. The legend of Jewish ancestry might make some of them giggle, but it was even more fantastic and unreal than the feudal French names of other Haitians. The Duc de Marmalade was one of the courtiers of the mad emperor Faustin Soulouque, and the hamlet of Marmalade, reachable by burro, still

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exists in the jungle center of Haiti. Faustin the First (there was no second or other) named four princes, fifty-nine dukes, ninety counts, two hundred barons, three hundred and forty-six chevaliers. Later the deputies and senators also became barons. Massacre and forgetfulness have ended most of these lines.

IN JACMEL, a tiny town on the sea with an unpaved Grande Rue and traffic jams of black Haitian pigs—which are as skinny and speedy as dogs—perhaps once a week a police jeep scattered them, flailing dust—and a *pension*, telephones and electricity which rarely worked, the look of a spoiled African village—in this place, Jacmel, I found a Jewish tailor. There were a few of the elegant carpentered Haitian dreamhouses in Jacmel, floating above reality like a magic vision, but Monsieur Schneider lived in a dwelling only a step above the *caille-paille*, the country hut of mud and straw. He did his work on a hand-treadled machine out in the dusty street, his head tilted on one side to favor his good eye, his joints swollen and his body twisted by arthritis. He was old and wore hand-sewn rags, like many other Haitians, but the rags were sewn into the blurred shape of a European shirt and a suit. It was too hot for such formal etiquette. He was one of two or three white people in the town. In the air around him, like the insects and the animals—the little black Haitian pigs that ran and even barked like dogs—eddied the members of his extended family, the mixed African and Semitic, some dark and some light, children and adults, wives and grandchildren.

With no authority but our common color and my knowing his name, I spoke with him, first in English. No English, but he understood that I was asking if he was a Jew. Was *I*? Yes. *Oui*. A flood of Yiddish poured out of his head. I spoke no Yiddish. He looked at me as if to doubt my sanity. A Jew I said, and spoke no Yiddish? He tried Creole. We settled on French, which he spoke in a Yiddish accent, with Creole words and phrases. He believed I was what I said I was, for otherwise what gain could there be for either of us? He was a shriveled old man, kicking amiably at the grandchildren—children?—playing about the treadles of his Singer machine. The treadle was cast with scrolls and Art Nouveau symbols in iron polished by his bare feet. To do honor to our conversation, he slipped his feet into sandals soled with sliced and shaped tires and sisal uppers.

He did not have the look of a man who asked deep questions, but he stared at me from his one good eye. "What's a Jew—?" he asked.

I had no answer until he finished the question. "—doing in Jacmel?"

His face, shriveled against sunlight, shriveled by age, blotched and deeply freckled, looked like a dog's muzzle. "Why is a Jew *living* here?" I asked him in return.

"My home," he said. "Living? You call this a life? My wife is dead. I have another wife. My children and grandchildren."

"Would you forgive my asking how you happened to settle in Jacmel?"

He pumped furiously at the machine. He was fixing a seam, a simple matter, but he gave it all his concentration. Then he looked up and squinted around at me. I had moved so he wouldn't be staring into the sun and he winked at so much consideration, Jew to Jew.

"Jacmel," he said. "And where else is there?"

Jeremie, St.-Marc, Cap Haitien, Port-au-Prince, Port-de-Paix—that's all.

"Were you Polish?" I asked him.

"Russian."

"So were my parents. Why didn't you go to the United States?"

"Ah," he said. "Because I wanted to learn the French and Creole languages, *c'est vrai*?"

"*Non*," I said.

"Because,"—and he spread wide his arms—"I had adventure in my heart?"

"No."

He put down his cloth, he stood up, he was a tiny old man with one dead eye. He put his face close to mine, pulled at the lid of the dead eye as if he were pulling at a piece of excess cloth, and said, "I went to the Ellis Isle, maybe your father did too. But he didn't have a sick eye. At that time it was infected from the trip. They sent me away. And then I wandered, no place to go, so instead of killing myself I came to Haiti."

Stupid to be oppressed by sadness and a sick eye from a generation before I was born. "I'm sorry," I said.

He started to laugh. It was not the dry, fearful, old-man's Jewish laughter of my uncles in Cleveland. It was a rich, abandoned, Haitian old-man's laughter. He clutched at his pants for luck. "You see these children? You see all the beautiful brown Schneider children in Jacmel? Many died, my wives often die, but look what I have done. I have proved God is not malevolent. He let me live, He let some of these children live. God is indifferent, but perhaps I have shown, not proved, but *demonstrated* that He is not malevolent."

"If you believe, God is not evil, merely all-powerful."

He put his face down, he reached in his pocket for a cube of sugar and held it up to my face. "If He were all-powerful, then He would be evil. He could not allow what He allows. Coffee? You like Haitian coffee? Marie!" he shouted into the *caille-paille*. "*Café pou l'blanc!*"

I drank coffee with the tailor and his new wife, who said not a word as she sat with us. He sucked cubes of sugar and drank his coffee through them.

"I have a few books," he said, "but I was never a scholar. My uncle was a rabbi, I think my brother was going to be a rabbi, but—" He

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shrugged. "I never found out what he became. You're not a rabbi?"

"No."

"It's not so ridiculous. I heard once there are rabbis who don't speak Yiddish."

"I don't speak Hebrew, either."

"Then you couldn't be a rabbi, could you? But you speak other languages."

I wanted to give him answers and ask questions, but we drank coffee and made tiny conversation. We were two Jews speaking a mad polyglot in the town of Jacmel, which few people visit, even if they live in the nearby villages of Carrefour Fauche, Bassin Blue, or Bainet. Jacmel is the end of the world with a dusty street and a crowd of people. He didn't offer to show me about the village. We sat in his portion of the street in front of his door. His arthritis confined him to his sewing machine and his house of wood, mud, and straw. His house had a floor of hewn slats; it was not just a *caille-paille*. His wife watched us with mournful eyes, as if I would take him away from her, but time was taking him away faster than I could. We had little to say across the many years and many lives between us except to give each other greetings in the town of Jacmel.

When I said goodby, dizzy with coffee, he stood up painfully and I saw a small thin bent brown man, a creature neither Russian nor Jewish nor Haitian, something molded in time's hands like a clay doll. He put out his hand and said in a cracked voice, laughing at the peculiar word he must have pronounced for the first time in years: "*Shalom*!"

I would return to Jacmel to try to learn what living in this place meant for a Russian Jew, but although I did come back to visit, I was still only a tourist. A few years later there was a hurricane which devastated the village, and now, fifteen years later, I wonder what of Schneider's mark on life can still be felt there. Has one of the mixed-blood Schneiders learned to sew and use the treadle? Have they scattered? How many survive? No matter; he had many sons and daughters; something of Jewry has surely been sown in this corner of Haiti which is forsaken, like the rest of the world, by an indifferently fructifying God.

It seems that I had gone hunting for Jews, but in fact I was unaware of my desire. I was busy with wife and children, living under peculiar conditions—we kept a lizard in a cage, warning burglars of what our magic could do to them; I was writing, reading, floating, studying, learning about Haiti and Haitians, not about Jews. I was drifting and lazing with an island's self-sufficient isolation.

But when a Jew happened, I was alert. It was an odd nostalgia which chilled and awakened me; I didn't know why. I know why; it returned me to myself.

I met the old Russian Jew Lazaroff living with his Haitian wife and his library on the mountain leading from Port-au-Prince up above Kenscoff to the Forêt des Pins. He was unused to speaking with visitors, and it was a skill he didn't need anymore. He gave me coffee; he smiled without speaking when I looked at his books and said, "I've read that. . . . I've read that one. . . ."

"Please, if you would like to borrow?" he said at last.

"No, thank you, I have enough books. You've been here long?"

"Long," he said.

"You plan to stay very long?"

"Forever," he said.

"Why?"

He shrugged. "That's not very far away."

I met the French Calmann who had suffered under Hitler and chose not to suffer under the Soviet occupation of France. "If that happens," I said, "Haiti won't be safe, either."

"Haiti will be safer," he said stubbornly. "This time I've done all I can."

These flight-obsessed men, cutting their losses, limited their gains to nothing but survival. They served their time on earth as a dizzy bewilderment. Then it happened that I came to know Shimon Tal, the fisherman, who had more than survival in mind.

There was a small colony of foreigners attracted to expatriation in this dreamy corner of the world by island ease, drink, isolation, or porous laws. They could live with eleven-year-old girls or drink Rum Barbancourt, smoky and rich as brandy, or buy the police for whatever odd quirks or against whatever odd crimes they may have committed elsewhere. It was a good place to hide the self, and perhaps, in voodoo, excess, and wildness, even in odd new disciplines, also a place for finding selves. There were plenty of local fishers of souls, and plenty of souls to be fished—often, of course, the fishers and the fish were identical. Doc Reser, the retired Marine sergeant, was now a voodoo priest; a wild white pelt on his chest, much drink, little wily red barroom eyes; and old Dan Cassidy, once a fashion photographer in Paris and New York, who collected all his wives from one family, marrying the girl, divorcing her when she turned fifteen, looking toward her younger sister, trying again, one more good shot for true love; many others. There were the international bureaucrats, United Nations study groups, American military missions, Jesus missionaries, Belgian and Breton priests, chic Episcopalians, CARE officials trying to keep the milk away from the weevils and the politicians, researchers on detached service from the Katherine Dunham dance troupe, entranced addicts dug into a good connection, sly advisers and profiteers, apprentice white gods, retired white gods, a Swedish geologist looking for gold, oil, tungsten, or hemp—anything salable, aging Greenwich Village ladies who loved black men, or

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at least hoped to be loved in return, a few winsome homosexuals, political exiles with a purchase on the police, escapees from Devil's Island, and of course the wandering students and anthropologists who wore castoff World War II clothes and were forever looking for an authentic voodoo ceremony, finding a staged one. And settling for an authentic cockfight.

A LOVELY high-living international lady named Shelagh reminded me, with only the slightest touch of malice, just enough to keep awake in the hot season, that I might like to meet a fellow Jew. He was a United Nations fishing expert, an Israeli, and she described him as weathered and quiet as a farmer. "I like him, he's funny. He pretends he's asleep all the time because he's, you know—shy?"

I'd heard of that.

She had met him at an obligatory meeting for a UN official; he was hiding from the foreign colony. The notion of a shy Israeli of Middle European ancestry teaching this island people to fish made me smile, too. Maybe he wasn't shy, only embarrassed.

I didn't find him at any United Nations or American Aid drinkfests, but eventually we did meet. I was visiting the Damiens agriculture station outside Port-au-Prince. His Haitian "counterpart" (trainee), Monsieur Gerard, a gleaming, very polite graduate of the Damiens school, hung at his elbow as if his every motion gave hints about the puzzling folkways of fish. The counterpart might learn how fish bit and bred, swarmed in schools and took to the rushes, by studying this white man's gestures. We toured the ponds—carp, tilapia, fry, mature fish—and Tal explained about protein starvation and the bounty which could be provided by the sea and also by rivers, marshes, ditches, and ponds.

Then he asked to come to visit us. When he did, without Monsieur Gerard and his thermometer, grain samples, and Hebrew-French phrase book, he looked like just another lonely middle-aged Jew, far from home and missing his wife and children. His face was sunburned and peeling; there were broken capillaries, sunburn upon sunburn. Pale smile lines radiated from corners of eyes, corners of mouth. It was a face of hard work and abstract conviction. His family waited on the kibbutz back home. He was doing this service and he would use his pay to buy an earth-mover. In Israel he had built ponds to raise fish—*pisciculture* was a new word to me—refining the techniques taken by Yugoslavs from the ancient Chinese. And now here he was also planting tilapia, the African shmoo-fish, in the streams and ditches, besides constructing a few experimental carp ponds for venturesome Haitian businessmen.

"They are a wonderful people. They are so beautiful. But there are certain problems—" And he shook his head over the difficulties of organizing fishponds and threading a way through bureaucracies in Haiti. "But they are a beautiful, wonderful people."

He meant the perfume of Haitian women, the great gold hoops of earrings, and the sliding, enticing walk of those women. There were wonderful things in Haiti. A sensual walk served not to clean the ponds, or keep the spry safe from the voracious frogs, or feed the grains into the stream at the proper steady rate..

"—a wonderful, wonderful people, anyway. But they don't know anything about fish."

He was lonely and I was married, with small children in the house, and thus he became uncle, grandfather, guide, and patron, in return for a place to sit and talk about Israel. "We can learn from these beautiful, wonderful Haitian people," he said. "They know how to dress so beautiful. They can sit and do nothing and smile so. We need to learn some of that, too."

In the meantime, Monsieur Gerard, his colleague, learned to plant fish in the ditches, flooded fields, and waterways. I traveled with them by jeep into the markets of Les Cayes, St.-Marc, Jeremie, Jacmel, and up the mountain from Port-au-Prince to Kenscoff—pine and eucalyptus, a sudden spring in the perpetual humid August—and everywhere now tilapia could be bought for a few pennies in the marketplace. Tilapia is a stubborn little African fish which grows eagerly in salt, brackish, or fresh water, in ditches, streams, rice fields, ponds, and puddles, breeding handsomely everywhere, provided only that the water remains warm. It had not existed in Haiti; Tal brought it from Africa. Planted occasionally, it grew throughout the island. Tal guessed that the fish, installed near the mouths of streams giving onto the Caribbean, had been carried to the mountains by birds; or perhaps eggs had clung to the birds' wings and then been dropped in mountain sources. The upstream magic of fertility.

We stood in the market at St.-Marc and looked at some cooked fish in a pan. "*Combien?*" I asked.

"*Deux cob.*"

"*Que-est-ce que c'est?*"

"*Poisson juif.*"

They had never seen a Jew, but somehow they knew by the "*telejiol*"—telemouth—that this fish was to be called Jewfish. In another village it was called *poisson Israélite.* And in another *poisson Assad,* because it had been found first in this locality on lands belonging to a man named Assad, a Lebanese. The *telejiol* works like magic—but not perfectly.

Tal played with my children, counseled my wife, told us his troubles, and said to us: "Someday you will visit us on the kibbutz." Amid the drums of voodoo ceremonies, the crazy golden age of Haitian prosperity—generals in Eisenhower jackets tailored in Jamaica, much aid from elsewhere—it seemed odd to remember the nation of of Jews far away and for which this man longed.

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"It is not so much luxury, but it is nice," he said. "If they let us live, you will see swimming, culture, fine things. This could be a beautiful, wonderful country, also."

I took ill with malaria and he sat by my bed. I thought I would die, but he was smiling and so I knew I would live.

He told me about the other Israeli in Haiti—Schwartz, a tomato farmer. He was a Jew who called himself an Israeli, and therefore Tal considered him what he said he was, though he spoke no Hebrew. He grew tomatoes with cheap Haitian labor. He planned to ship them to Florida. He would get rich on delicious little year-round Haitian tomatoes. He borrowed money and took the necessary uniformed military Haitian partners. They grinned at sharing with him. Sometimes they came to inspect the fields and took a bite from a tomato and when the juice ran down the lovely front of the Eisenhower combat jacket, an aide ran forward to wipe.

Suddenly there were new taxes. Why new taxes? Schwartz wanted to know.

Taxes, everyone knows about Haitian taxes, but Schwartz didn't know. It was a game they played with foreign businessmen—not Brown & Root, not the big companies from Texas, but with the tasty little innocents like Schwartz. Schwartz didn't know what he was doing.

However, if he increased the balance of the partnership, an arrangement could be made about the taxes. How to do that? A colonel, squeezing deliciously into a tomato, little pink seeds on his chin, suggested that his share be doubled.

"But twice 50 per cent is 100 per cent!" cried Schwartz.

The colonel made a lightning calculation. "Yess," he said.

"That leaves nothing for me!"

The colonel's lips bubbled fresh tomato juice. He agreed. Yess.

"Impossible, impossible!" Schwartz wailed.

"Possible," said the colonel, a resourceful mathematician.

Schwartz found himself one midnight being awakened by gentlemen in a police Buick. He finished the night in jail. He passed a few more days in this place. A Haitian jail is as bad as a Syrian one, especially when a man's partner is not only an army colonel, but also a police colonel. A Syrian jail might be worse, but a Haitian jail is bad enough.

Tal found the correct channel for the money and got him out. "Go home, not to America," he said. "Son, you're not a tomato rancher. Don't try to do something you can't, such as raising tomatoes in Haiti."

"I'm not really an Israeli," said Schwartz, "It's very complicated."

"Well, be one. It's your last chance. You're no bargain, Schwartz."

Tal sat by the bed in which I was recovering from malarial hepatitis, smelling the damp ticking of my mattress, and told me that the poor fellow was just a confused Jew from middle somewhere-else who thought he could purify his soul with tomatoes and dollars. He had a tattoo on his wrist. A survivor, but a war casualty. Tal shook his head mournfully. "The trouble we get into," he said. "In Israel it's different. Different trouble. I don't think we can make anything with Schwartz, but he's tired. He thinks all you have to do now is grow the tomatoes. He should go home to rest."

It was tempting to make the Israeli fishing expert the bearer of my hopes for a Jewish hero in life and a Jewish community on earth. And I surrendered to that temptation and hope. Amid the smell of mangoes and woodsmoke, the hot winds of black history, the humid simmering of Port-au-Prince, I had found a few black, Roman Catholic, voodooesque Jews. The traders of a hundred years ago, a hundred and fifty years ago, yesterday, had wandered so far, trying their luck, and died after planting their brown Cohens, Goldenbergs, Weiners, Levis, Schneiders, on this forgotten island. In the mulatto population of Haiti there were also French, Germans, Danes—one family of beautiful coffee-colored girls with Scandinavian faces, finally achieving the smooth tan which Danish women always want—and gloomy Poles from the village of Casals. And Jews. Who? Whose?

Where do I ever find them?

Wherever I am. Within myself.

Where is that?

It was in Haiti just then, amid the descendants of, among others, the gloomy Poles. But also there was the beautiful Dr. Goldenberg, plump, brown, *diplomée* from the Cornell Medical School. "They use makeup," Tal said. "They walk so. They dance so. Our women can learn from them even now," said the man who disseminated the Jewfish. He would have liked his daughters on the kibbutz to learn the secrets of Creole grace from the languorous *doctoresse*, Felice Goldenberg.

To fix in the mind a good man is a difficult task. What do you remember? Kind smiles, a habit of amiable judgment? Heroes make extraordinary sacrifices in moments of danger, but Tal merely took friendship from me and gave his own in return. He was a good man, and what I remember after the fish-farmer's love of fish was his joy when they spawned in a tricky pond. "Look! There will be good spry!" And that he watched the beautiful Haitian girls avidly and in all innocence. The desire to find small perfections in womankind and in nature constituted the hope in his loneliness for country and family.

The persistence of Jean Berlin, his grin, shrewdness, secret knowledge, his handsome roars

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of Haitian laughter: "I'm the only one in the family who remembers. Of course, I'm a Catholic like everyone else." Delighted and maliciously elated because of his grandfather from Berlin. "I know, I know anyway."

My friend Cohen, the anti-Semite, who found a business to suit his temperament. He imported Manischewitz Kosher Wine, sweet and thick, and advertised it for Saturday nights. Kosher was the magic word he blandished, magic first of all for himself. He understood the Haitian tradition of fear of the white stranger and longing for his potency; the mysteries of the alien people had formed his own disturbed soul. Fountains of youth and aphrodisiacs have always been popular in Latin and Caribbean places. The anti-Semite, Cohen, felt pleasure surge through his body at the menace and promise of the Word. He would profit from it himself. "Kosher!" screamed the newspaper announcements. "Guaranteed to be kosher! Try it and see! Try it tonight! If it doesn't turn out to be kosher, your money back!"

The tailor in Jacmel with his bad eye and his attendant court of brownish children, squatting in the dust of a dying colonial town, dying forever, dying for many generations, dying forever and persisting in life. He sat by his machine and we groped for our few words of Yiddish and finally spoke French and Creole with each other. Two Jews in Jacmel, finding Creole their common lanugage for saying that they have a nostalgia for a town they had never seen, Jerusalem.

HAITI WAS a land without Jews, no rabbi, no place of worship, no community, and yet one Jew, Shimon Tal, made it a Jewish place for me. In the cemetery there were Jews buried, with crosses over their graves.

When I recovered from malaria, I wanted to go with Tal to Jacmel to meet old Schneider. "I'm waiting for that," Tal said.

We took a jeep, bucking and churning over the rocky dry streambeds into the isolated village. I asked myself how the squinting Jewish tailor, dry as a pod in the sun, survived that Haitian male vanity which leads every man to seek to be the *coq du village*. Well, for one thing he seemed to have most of the children of the town. He rode with the vanity. He removed himself into himself, and observed his children, blood of his blood, growing their own souls, compounded of Schneider and of Haiti. And old as he was, teasing with me, he had touched his own balls for luck against the stranger.

Suddenly dust, chickens, speedy black pigs in the road, and the leaning nightmare craziness of Jacmel. I expected to see the tailor sewing in the street, as I had first seen him. But it was an overcast day and maybe he was indoors. "*Où est Monsieur Schneider?*"

"*Pas conne,*" said a child, and ran away. I was sure it was one of his sons. He stood as far away as he could, giggling and shouting, "*Pas conne.*"

Of course he knew.

"*Où est Schneider?*"

In his house, open to the street, the sewing machine stood dusty on a base of slats in the corner. He had died and was forgotten—weeks dead. He had died and was not forgotten. There was a ceremony that night for the rest of his soul.

In the *hounfor*, the temple outside town in the brush, an all-day ceremony was going on, three drummers urging the congregation into a whole series of voodoo possessions by the new god Ibo-Juif. Tal and I strolled over. Evidently Ibo-Juif was a happy god. The celebrants were drinking the blood of a bull recently slaughtered, catching his blood in pans laid at the slit belly. Gleaming mulatto boys, all named Schneider, danced about us, with firm tiny erections after so much excitement and laughter. It was slaughter and homage for the disappeared tailor from the Ukraine. His Haitian family danced, seeming to climb in the air, hauling invisible ladders after them as they climbed, and only the shriveled morose wife sat exhausted by her weeping in a corner of the zinc-roofed shack. Waves of drumbeats swept over her grief. The boys grabbed their genitals for luck and consolation in the time of the death of their father.

Tal and I stood silent. Then Tal's lips were moving. He ignored the need for ten men, he ignored his own atheism. He was murmuring the prayer for the dead. Later I told him he should have held himself at the groin in that all-purpose Haitian curse, blessing, and reassurance of power in the midst of ultimate powerlessness.

WE RETURNED to Port-au-Prince almost without speaking to each other except for the necessary collaboration of the road. I stood in a stream to guide the jeep forward over a mud bank; Tal showed me how to spin a jack tool when a tire blew out in a stretch of dried ruts. By the time we reached the outskirts of the capital—market women, dogs and chickens and pigs in the road, peddlers, the mobs of hungry-eyed children staring with dead sugar stalks in their mouths—we could talk of other things. His family, my family, fishing, the Artibonite dam project which would stand as an uncompleted ruin when the Magloire government fell.

"You will visit me at Nir David?" Tal asked. "We have found a Roman mill. Underground waters which was tapped maybe three thousand years ago. Were tapped?"

"Yes."

"You will come to see with your family?"

"I don't know," I said.

He was hugging the wheel of the jeep with both arms. "You are thinking about it?" he said.

"Haiti is enough traveling for awhile. The Jews of Haiti are keeping me busy enough."

He looked at me puzzled, the sweat running in

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rivulets through the dust on his face, and then realized that he knew enough English to understand me correctly. He smiled broadly. Haiti has no Jews.

I learned in Haiti that to be a Jew required nothing at all (I was well equipped with that). And this ignorance led to a powerful understanding, that history really exists and therefore I am a part of it, and there is no oblivion anywhere but in death, no salvation anywhere but on earth. It seemed unfair to abandon lonely men to that lonely place, the kingdom, empire, and republic of Haiti, but fairness played no part in it, for them or for the starved children on the road. That Jews had always been there and left their mark was nevertheless a profound comfort to me. The continuity of suffering is a paradoxical form of reassurance, but it can happen like that anyway. It was possible to survive anyplace; it is necessary to survive somehow.

As Haiti became a land filled with Jews, so my heart was filled with the sense that I was no different from those lonely men who would die on the mountain at the edge of the Forêt des Pins, or had already died in St.-Marc or Jacmel, or in the erosion of time as their sons forgot who their fathers were. Their sons do not forget; or if they do, nature does not, which shapes them; and if nature does, history finally does not.

Reconciliation also brings practical joys. My tradition, Cleveland and Jewish, would not let me populate Haiti with ghosts and spirits; that would be superstitious and a waste of a good education; and I could remember how my mother always wanted me to be another Jewish doctor, and then contemplate with my new genetic eyes, with my mother's passion for medical degrees and my friend Tal's for erotic good sense, the luxurious walk of the mocha-colored *doctoresse*, Felice Goldenberg.

WHEN I LEFT Haiti a few weeks later, I had troubles in the customs house with an officer who wanted to put mysterious taxes on my belongings. He was that cool official, known the world over, who makes others sweat. The sun beat down murderously on the zinc roof; fingers turned slimy as I tried to fill out forms; he knew exactly what he wanted and the heat could not touch him. Amid the shouts, groans, and shrieks of stevedores, the dust and reek of the port he remained calm, wearing military khakis and a khaki tie with a question mark embroidered on it. My wife asked him what was the question and he answered: A *blanc* will never know. *Même pas une blanche.*"

He grinned and showed his teeth and his charmed face looked as if it knew it could open up and send the flies reeling in his life's sweet breath. I argued for my rights against the taxes he had invented on the spot, export duties on my own shirts, inspection duties, *impôts de passage*. I called out the names of my friends in the military, in the government. Finally he shrugged and said, "Give me half of the tax."

"No, that's ridiculous."

"A third."

"No."

"Then ten dollars," he burst out, "for my time which I have wasted on you! I've got to get something from you now." And he grabbed himself for magic against defeat by a foreigner.

I felt evil myself for beating him down so fast. It was too easy. Yes, now I would give him a ten-dollar bribe, and hope that all my suitcases got on board.

It was not difficult to offer him the money. It required no special envelope, slyness, or tact. During my year and a half in Haiti I had learned the basic techniques. Take money from pocket, hold it between two fingers. Recipient extends palm and pauses a moment submissively. His eyelids fall dreamily. Look nonchalant. Let bill touch hand. Hand closes; the heat of two bodies shimmers invisibly; it is an incomplete communion, celebrated through the intermediary of abstract work and goods in the form of cash.

Tal was there to bid us goodby and Captain Prosper said, "That is why I make things so easy for you. Monsieur Tal has brought us the *poisson Israélite.*"

"Thank you very much," I said.

"You are also *Israélite*?"

"He is an Israeli. I'm an American."

"The Republic of Haiti declared war on Germany twenty-four hours before the United States. Good thing you did, however, you North Americans. And the Republic of Haiti voted for Israel in the United Nations—I know my history—though it is said that certain Zionist agents purchased the vote of Haitian diplomats. Alas. The foreign service was corrupt in that period—"

I had heard the story.

He opened the door courteously, and we stepped out of the cookery of the customs shed (zinc roof, heat reflecting crazily, like scooting mites across the eyes), out onto the wharf, where the gang bosses' screams of abuse replaced mechanized loading equipment. Captain Prosper fingered the raised question mark on his tie. "One of our first visitors was a Jew," he said. He grinned happily. "Christopher Columbus." And roared wth laughter. The ten-dollar bill stuck out of the pocket of his *veston Eisenhower*. "Columbus brought syphilis to the island, destroyed the Carib Indians, and made room for civilized Dahomey people, also Ibos, also Yorubas. Personally, I happen to be descended straight from an Abyssinian prince, and we go back, as you probably know, through Sheba to the King of the Jews."

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The Aristocrat in Local Politics

Roger Starr

MOST OF US were told long ago that the old-time city politician, his status built on jobs for election captains and Thanksgiving baskets for the needy, had slipped, mastodon-like, into extinction. The New Deal and subsequent social legislation had allegedly rendered him useless, replacing his repertoire of favors for afflicted constituents with a battery of institutional devices to provide group care: trade unions to intercede with employers for the redress of grievances; Social Security and tax-assisted pension plans to give succor to the aged; free colleges and universities for the young; hospital and health-care programs for the sick; the public-defender system (or publicly-supported, privately-managed legal-aid systems) to help those accused of crimes.

Yet the systems do not work perfectly in every case; perhaps not even in *any* case. No one, then, should be surprised to find that just as old-style politicians could feed on a harvest of hardship, so a new, though smaller, class can glean a leaving from the scattered personal problems left behind after a systematic social program cuts across the urban landscape.

In those tormented sections of the city where poverty was rediscovered about ten years ago, private charities have never been able to wither away. They have been supplemented lately by publicly-managed charitable organizations, known collectively as the poverty program. Within the ranks of their staffs, a fairly considerable number of people are now exercising the ancient art of winning popularity by attending to personal grievances. Some, at least, have developed for themselves that web of recognition, loyalty, and institutional support which is now labeled "a power base." From it, they prepare to move forward into general politics.

More surprisingly, even the less troubled sections of the city now offer the opportunity of political advancement to a few aspirants who are willing to devote their time to the redress of individual grievances, or to the care of subgroups which feel themselves affronted by some pending or past action of government. Why should a young politician find it profitable to tend these backyards and forgo that attention to the solution of general political problems that has usually been the sign of the advanced and educated political leader?

Partly, of course, young men in American politics have been caught in the cloud of academic doubt which has lately settled on general political theory itself. They have heard from moral preceptors at the university that the individual enjoys ethical primacy over any class or group, and that his needs, or hers, deserve first attention.

Partly also, those with a residual ambition for political power find that emphasizing personal service to the individual or the small group of local people offers a safe haven from the consequences of a bad guess as to how the present American turmoil will end. Will the "changes" in American life result in so basic an alteration of institutional patterns that they can truly be called revolutionary? Then it is well not to have been too closely identified with the *ancien régime*. Will campus turmoil, racial strife, and youthful disaffection run only a short course of confrontation before becoming politically normalized? Then it would be better not to have been caught with your vanguard showing. Thus it is safer to spend your energy on specific good works than on intellectualizing, the sins of intellectual omission never having been taken seriously in American life.

PERHAPS the best-known example of the new type of urban politician is Carter Burden, a twenty-eight-year-old New York City Councilman. Burden is described in his official biography as the youngest man ever to be elected to the New York City Council. If he presages a growing class, we may expect to hear even more often about the vital suffering of tightly localized constituents. Burden, specifically, advocates his constituents' needs in so strident a vocabulary and so emotional a tone that he sounds entirely the young revolutionary; but he advocates very little of a programmatic nature which, if couched differently, might not resemble normal, old-style politics. This does not mean that those who believe in the relevance of economics to human affairs will be impressed by Burden's grasp of this gloomy subject.

Finally, Burden may be demonstrating to prospective imitators that the dedication of one's career—or, more precisely, a first stage of one's career—to the redress of individual or small-group grievances (rather than to Labor, or International Affairs, or Good Government, or Civil Rights, or some other general cause) *works*, even in a diverse, but not a "disadvan-

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taged" section of the city. You can find recognizable problems to talk about; you can establish an agenda. And with a certain physical presence, with the private money to maintain a Councilman's staff not officially provided, and with a proclivity for speaking or writing so stridently that the manner outshouts the meaning, one soon attracts general notice. Carter Burden himself may well turn out to be no mere road-company player but a major star on a major stage.

BURDEN FIRST RAN for the City Council in 1969, picking the district that includes most of the fashionable East Side of Manhattan. This area contains not only the established rich families of Park and Fifth Avenues, but the younger office executives and professional people who live in the newer apartment houses further east. It is almost impossible—though perhaps totally unfair—to abstain from characterizing them as "swingers"; at any rate, they represent a new, distinctive urban group, not found in such concentration elsewhere in the city—or perhaps in the nation. With one foot planted on the first rungs of a career, and the other still on the unsteady boat of youth, they respond with great sympathy to Burden's mixture of flaming language and hyper-solvency. The district, in addition, contains older residents of tightly-limited means. Their children long ago moved into the working middle class, a social jump which is represented physically by migration to the outer boroughs of the city, or the suburbs. Their native language is most likely not English, but one of the many tongues originally spoken in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These people comprise the potential clientele of the social-welfare institutions of the area—including the local churches and at least one major remaining settlement house. The clergy and the staffs of these institutions are concerned that their clients will be thrust from the area by new apartment-house construction, a worry shared widely even by native-born citizens who live in small apartment buildings in the side streets. Although it lacks a significant number of the new middle class, Burden's councilmanic district cuts into East Harlem to include a number of Puerto Rican families. Its western boundary runs for several blocks along Central Park, in whose health many rich constituents are interested.

It should be understood that Mr. and Mrs. Burden had not long been living in the district when he sought to represent it in the City Council. The society pages of the *Times* had already noted this non-disadvantaged couple (Mrs. Burden is the truly beautiful daughter of Mrs. William S. Paley, wife of the Chairman of the Board of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., while Burden is a graduate of Portsmouth Priory, Harvard, and the Columbia Law School, and the son of William Burden, an investment banker and broker). That newspaper and several magazines had lavishly described the process of decorating the Burden apartment in the famous old Dakota on Central Park West; shortly thereafter, they did the same at River House, one of the city's most impressive cooperative apartment houses, which, on the East River at 52nd Street, allegedly served as the prototype for *Dead End*, the Sidney Kingsley play of social protest in the 1930's. Unfortunately, neither home lies within the borders of the Fourth District which Burden sought to represent. He thereupon established an official residence in an apartment house on Fifth Avenue near 96th Street.

Having moved, Burden at twenty-seven announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for the Council. He carried the primary by a resounding majority, winning all but three election districts, and in the general election in November 1969, he carried every election district. Slim, energetic, a young prince, often seen smoking a pipe while looking as innocent as a child prodigy of the violin, he bore the implicit imprimatur of the Kennedy dynasts, partly because of a mild physical resemblance to Robert F. Kennedy, and partly because of an association with the late Senator's project for the resuscitation of Bedford-Stuyvesant. Burden's candidacy also won favorable notice twice in the New York *Times*.

Although the *Times* urged the electorate to vote for Burden "despite the attention he gets in the society columns," one should not discount the advantages of aristocracy in American political life. Since the Industrial Revolution, aristocracy has connoted primarily money wealth, but not all American money is aristocratic: if he is to benefit from an aristocratic aura, the candidate cannot have earned his money himself. Even inherited wealth implies aristocracy only in company with education (which should not be confused with learning); most naturally, American aristocracy requires a racial or national origin that is recognizably English or early American, but if one's ancestry is deficient, it can be replaced by familiar acquaintance with the traditional dependents of the aristocracy, the practitioners of the arts or the arbiters of refined taste. To benefit politically from his status, the American aristocrat should be capable of indignation, but never of pedantry; he is not expected to have mastered the details of a subject (though his devotees may thrill to the justification of their faith in him, when he proves he has). He is, however, expected to embody a reliable and lasting set of personal values which, though seldom articulated, may be relied on by his constituents to steady them through changing times or to give them confidence in objectives previously outside the bounds of normal political action. By these guidelines, we would certainly class Burden as an aristocrat along with Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Woodrow Wilson would not have made it; John F. Kennedy was an aristocrat, but neither his father, who earned his wealth, nor Herbert H. Lehman, who inherited it, was one. (Robert Lehman, who recently left his art collection to the Metropolitan Museum, and who was Herbert Lehman's younger cousin, would have qualified politically as an aristocrat, if only he had chosen to enter politics.)

IF WE ACCEPT something of this definition, we find that while aristocrats have sometimes been chosen to head reform movements in American cities, they have also been chosen for entirely different roles. Burden is by no means the first aristocrat in New York politics; "boss" myths to the contrary, the city's political history is studded with patricians, though, like the

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candied fruit in a Nesselrode pudding, they have varied in flavor and shape. We might illuminate Burden's role by examining two extreme examples of aristocrats as mayors: A. Oakey Hall and Seth Low.

Mr. Hall was described by James Gordon Bennett in these words on his accession to office: "It will be a refreshing novelty to have for Mayor of New York City a strictly upright, honorable, capable man . . . who conducts the most difficult cases on the calendar, mixes a lobster salad as well as Delmonico's head cook, smokes the best cigar in New York, respects old age, and admires youth, as poets and orators invariably do."

Missing from this catalogue is the crucial fact that William Marcy Tweed, the leader of Tammany Hall, had chosen Hall to preside gracefully over Tweed's rifling of the municipal treasury. In fairness, it should be recalled that modern students, including Seymour Mandelbaum particularly, have decided that Tweed gave better value for his pay than have many well-meaning citizens, before and since, who have inflicted pet schemes for municipal improvement on their fellow taxpayers. It is also true that in three trials Hall was never convicted of complicity in Tweed's swindles, but only the most determined skeptic about guilt by association would issue him an honorable discharge.

At the other end of the scale, we would find Seth Low, who became in 1901 the second mayor of the Consolidated City of New York. A Republican, descendant of a shipping family, a Brooklyn patrician, and a former mayor of that previously independent city, he ran with anti-Tammany Democratic support and was largely responsible for getting the first New York subway construction under way. He presided with incorruptible honesty and, we are told, with impenetrable boredom over the city. By his presence, he managed to strengthen the sense of new unity in what had been independent jurisdictions. After a single term in office, he retired from politics, later becoming president of Columbia University, then regarded as a nonviolent position. Low Library, a contemporary target for campus dissidents, honors Mayor Low's father with funds contributed by the ex-mayor himself.

It is perhaps not purely fanciful to suggest that without serving as anyone's agent—which Hall wholly did, and which some have suggested that Low did, in part, by accepting Democratic support—Burden steadies his constitutents through the difficulties of the present period by allowing them to accept the improbable without question. To understand this proposition, one should look at the variety of Burden's constituency and wonder how he is able to appeal to all, or nearly all of it at once. One answer must be that his aristocratic bearing, with its implication of disinterestedness, enables his constituents to believe in the possibility of achieving "change" without incurring "progress." In the curious turn which American urban politics have taken, this is precisely the objective sought by Burden's constituents: the rich, the swingers, the poor, and the Puerto Ricans alike. They, or to be more precise, groups of them, do indeed want *something* changed, though in the identification of precisely what, they might not agree. But in desiring the change (even if it is only a change in the too-fast rate at which things are already changing), they can implicitly rely on the inherent stability of their aristocratic legislator to prevent it from sliding into that cataclysmic whirlpool now suggested by the word "progress."

For the people, variously, in Burden's district, change means new restrictions on the ability of apartment-house builders to take down old but occupied buildings, replacing them with new, large, expensive apartment houses; change means younger people in office; change means more comfortable, cleaner, less crowded subways; change means cleaner and safer parks; change means a deeper municipal interest in the "qualitative" cultural aspects of city life; change means new restrictions against erecting structures in the park; change means more convenient shopping, and new laws to protect small shopkeepers against serious rent increases; change, for the old people in the district and others of limited income, means better medical care; change means prompter attention by the city government to all complaints against landlords, and to protection against muggers and drug sellers; and, extending to a nearly universal cross section of the total constituency, change means increasing firmness in the administration of rent control so that tenants will be assured that the apartments they live in will comply with all applicable or improved regulations.

Progress, on the other hand, means the movement of vast, uncontrollable forces. It means the uprooting of beautiful trees in a corner of Central Park in order to dig a trench in which there will later be a subway tunnel; progress means tearing down familiar old buildings with local shops, in order to construct the branch of a major department store, no doubt bringing crowds of non-residents into the district; progress means demolishing nearly satisfactory old (and relatively cheap) apartment structures to make possible new and costly apartment buildings paying much higher taxes; it means the expansion of mammoth education and health institutions, frequently after buying and clearing old buildings, and replacing their resident tenants with institutional employees; progress means raising rents so that the owners of apartment houses will be able to keep them in decent condition, no matter whether or not tenants can afford this; progress means big government, too serious for frivolous experiment.

At a closer look, one might suspect that change and progress are not polar opposites, but that, rather, they are intertwined. More comfortable subways are not even theoretically possible without the construction of new lines which go where people want to go, even if lovely trees must be torn down to make way for them; if better medical services are to be provided, institutions must be expanded to provide for them; if thieves and muggers are to be discouraged, police salaries must be met from higher taxes, and new, bigger buildings are needed to produce them, as well as to make homes available for those who want and can afford them; if the city is to encourage its cultural "quality," it must surely arrange to provide exhibition space for art treasures

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given to it, even if this sometimes means the enlargement of a museum structure already in the Park; if theft is to be discouraged constructively, jobs must be provided for undertrained people with a possible increase of opportunity, and the expansion of major health institutions has provided thousands of these jobs. The linkage of the desired change to the unwanted progress can be extended almost throughout the list.

IN THE old tradition, the locally-elected party legislator took for granted that his people had to accept something they did not want in order to obtain whatever they did want from city government. No change in laws or party structure can alter this fundamental reciprocity; it is established by the need to apportion the costs and benefits of the community in response to conflicting demands. In the days of party regularity the path to political advancement in the city was opened primarily to that local legislator who showed the ability to win some points for his people at the general expense, while not losing their support even when they were forced to bow to *force majeure* on other issues. It might even be argued that this system provided a sound test of ability, the art of government on even the highest levels consisting of a talent for effective compromise without a fatal loss of leadership or principle. No one in New York City today can seriously believe that the ladder of political advancement is solidly planted either at the bottom or the top, and as a result there is no political advantage in a successful balancing of the general usefulness against the particular demands of local constituents. No one seeking political preferment can look upward for thanks or recognition. Instead, he searches for an explosive issue that will propel him upward, as weightless as Peter Pan.

Now that Burden has established himself as an elected politician, the very disorganization of party politics has made his public statements amount to this search for a convincing explosion. His efforts, so far, have amounted to applying verbal torches to convenient, public targets. The verbal torches, and the targets, include: "glib" (Thomas P. F. Hoving's statement in support of Metropolitan Museum expansion); "mad" (the staff and officials of the New York City Board of Water Supply); "morally insensitive" (officials of the City's Housing and Development Administration); "contemptuous" (Edward A. Logue, President, New York State Urban Development Corporation); "using public office to further their own interest" (Thomas A. Appleby, Executive Director, and Edmund Wagner, Trustee, United Nations Development Corporation); "hypocritical" (Mayor Lindsay during the 1969 campaign, in which Burden worked); "more concerned with the profits than with human life and suffering" (Harry Helmsley, real-estate developer); "cultural ghetto" (Manhattan, because it has "too many" museums).

This small list of epithets gives only an inadequate idea of the flammable tone of Burden's spoken and written comments, uttered within much less than a year, on matters being heard before various boards and commissions of the City of New York in which he has found his constituents interested. If the entry of the aristocrat into politics was in an earlier age expected to elevate the tone of public discussion, changing its subject matter from persons to issues, Burden can be said to have reversed the process. By a curious irony, his tones of indignation and moral judgment conflict with his own current theory of government, but would have been quite appropriate in the Age of Reform. The "good" government, to which that era's protagonists aspired, was expected to embody moral principles, like the merit system, even when they were despised by the local urban voters. Burden, contrariwise, has frequently reminded his auditors that this is the age of *participatory* democracy, meaning that the supreme political value is established by the local popular will. The "good" government, an ideal of the earlier era, must therefore be decried as distant, inhuman, "bureaucratic" (a recurrent adjective), and stultified.

THE CURIOUS irony in this position is that while it ostensibly arises from a criticism of the insensitivity of the present governmental structure to the needs of the people, the kinds of solutions proposed by Burden (and so many other enthusiasts of local control) invariably require the services of an equally large, intricate, and remote governmental structure in order to make them possible. What will guarantee that these new bureaus will now and hereafter avoid the stultification and dehumanization that has, in Burden's often repeated view, dulled their past performance? Nothing, of course, but the scorn and invective which he levels at them.

This ambiguity toward government—that it must be both the cause and the cure—accounts for the statement sometimes made about Burden by his friends and admirers, that the objects of his invective should not object to his tone because he does not really mean what he says. After all, if he meant what he says about the government officials now in office in New York City, he would seek to curtail their power, not to increase their responsibilities; he would eliminate government services, not elaborate them. He would, ultimately, find his personal fulfillment not in the search for governmental power, which by its nature must deal with mankind in generalities and which generally teaches its practitioners that the horrible fates predicted for themselves by their constituents never happen. He would instead sharpen his own sensibility and gratify his need for personal involvement by private philanthropy, so much more traditionally aristocratic an occupation.

FINALLY, Burden presents us all with a new and curious caricature of the time: a figure of aristocratic parochialism. If one had to choose but a single characteristic on which aristocrats have prided themselves, it would be their breadth of outlook, their worldliness, their sense of kinship with other aristocrats in other countries. If aristocrats were concerned with New York City, it was the city, taken as a whole, in which they were concerned, not the welfare of one of its geographic parts; and, incidentally, it was New York as a world capital which stimulated their generosity, as they helped to bring it symbolic public

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structures which expressed their common cause with other patrons of European capitals.

It is therefore a striking confirmation of the loss by New Yorkers of their sense of common destiny that Burden, the aristocratic Councilman, should find it politically profitable to lay sole emphasis for urban salvation on the triumph of local self-determination. While he seeks to express the hope of successful local control, his constituents see in him a justification of their despair of finding a common salvation in which all their fellow citizens may join.

Anyone who took Burden seriously as the proponent of local control and of parochial standards would be accepting a quite remarkable shift from *basic* aristocratic values. Even if he had convinced himself of the significance of bending all government decisions to accede to local wishes, Burden surely knows that the important problems of the age —from pollution to housing to transport to the dismantling of a race-caste system of three-hundred-years' standing—cannot be settled in the neighborhood. Tempting though the prospect may be of avoiding another Vietnam by weakening central government, he has himself acknowledged that major improvements even in so clearly a local matter as housing for low-income families can be paid for only by the federal government. Should the federal government entrust its funds for the execution of housing programs to any institution with smaller natural authority than a city government? While Burden has tried to force city government to surrender its authority to the neighborhoods, threatening that the City Planning Commission will become irrelevant unless it approves forthwith what local boards demand, the threat is empty. It urges the abrogation of an existing authority, but does not promise a better one.

THE COMBINATION of ambition and wealth, a taste for invective and a youthful sense of having been born to power may provide a dangerous spark at a time when the public has been jaded to the point of responding only to hyperbole. The emergence into promience of Democrats like Richard L. Ottinger, whose wealth derives from U.S. Plywood Champion Papers Corporation, and Andrew Stein, a new State Assemblyman, whose father, Jerry Finklestein, has assembled a large fortune based on the ownership of the civil-service newspaper—*The Chief*—indicate that Burden is by no means alone in the field. The intriguing question is why the search for high political office—usually described as political "power"—should exert such a fascination for those who would appear able to exercise great power already in the same world in which politics holds sway. Of course, uniquely valuing *political* power, the men here described would deny that private power—money power—is in any sense equivalent, money power having long ago been trammeled by social action. An additional irony lines this response; for in the political world, too, each step upward is seen from below as providing for the exercise of more power than it seems actually to permit when one has reached it and tries to do what had seemed so readily feasible before.

THE SENSE of being powerless has been offered as the explanation of violence by dissident social groups, but in this populous, complex, and precedent-determined social order, *everyone* knows the sense of powerlessness. The lure of political office, like the lights on the water at East Egg, promises finally only disappointment. It is not inconceivable that some aspirant to public office, his progress facilitated by a particularly high degree of aristocratic trustworthiness, may seek successfully to dispel that disappointment by breaking the trammeling precedents of his office. Perhaps, if used wisely, the greater freedom of action will be necessary to restore a sense of power—even if only vicarious power—to a large section of the people. But what if this augmented power is not wisely used? And how shall anyone judge who might use it wisely except by watching the way in which he has responded to the challenges of office already assumed? Or by listening to his language?

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Three Easy Pieces

William S. Pechter

ROBERT DUPEA, the alienated hero of *Five Easy Pieces*, was a concert pianist, and has become an oil rigger. Among the various questions which may occur to you while watching the film are: Why has he dropped out? From what is he alienated? Was there any period of transition between his having been a pianist and having become a laborer? Did music ever really mean anything in his life? And is it music or something else that he means when he says to his father, late in the film, "Anyway, we both know I was never that good at it"? Among the questions which occurred to me was: How did this modest film of modest virtues, the equivalent in films of what is usually thought of as a good "first novel," ever manage to elicit such extravagant press notices as are being quoted in the ads for it?—and this question provoked in me a good deal more real curiosity than did any of the others.

I have no certain answer to the last question, and *Five Easy Pieces* provides none to the others. This reticence of the film might be regarded as one of its modest virtues, to the extent that it is a kind of tact, an avoidance of the usual set of alienated-hero-from-overprivileged-family clichés. But it is also, to the extent that it generalizes and diffuses the specific human drama, a defect, and a crippling one. The problem isn't the lack of information as such; rather the lack of a sense of the particularity of this character's despair. We probably don't "know" any more, biographically, of the heroine of *Eclipse* than we do of Robert Dupea, but, for all the time that Dupea is on screen, we actually "see" much less of him; her alienation is brought before us in all its crushing immediacy while his remains always something of an abstraction. The defect of *Five Easy Pieces* is that we don't really know the character sufficiently, but what is lacking is not information so much as an acuity of observation. He lacks vividness.

Robert's father doesn't answer the line quoted earlier because the father has been left mute and paralyzed by a stroke, and though his affliction "universalizes" him, making him into all our remote, failed fathers, one feels he has been imagined thus less in the interests of dramatic metaphor than of tractable convenience; there can be no real confrontation between son and this father, and, when Robert says, "I'm getting away from things that look bad if I stay—auspicious beginnings," the line is allowed both to seem the most revelatory in the film and to retain all its portentous generality (as well as to remain in apparent contradiction to Robert's protraction of an obviously hopeless affair with his waitress girlfriend). Given the vagueness at the role's center, Jack Nicholson brings all his intelligence and charm, which are considerable, to bear on the playing of it, and still makes less of an impression than he did in no more than a third the screen time in *Easy Rider*. And, in the absence of a binding center, the film itself splinters into bits and pieces of quite variable quality: a maudlin illustration of our being all bruised people in the form of a monologue by a girl Robert picks up about how she was told as a child that her cleft chin signified God's disfavor: a Second-City-like skit (good) of a doomed attempt to obtain a side order of toast at a roadside café, and another (fair) of a filth-obsessed lesbian hitchhiker; a ludicrous caricature of intellectual society within the circle of the family and its friends that provides Robert with still another easy mark with which to score against the sterility of the background he has rejected. A brief scene of sexual frenzy offers nothing so much as a horrible example by the standard of which to appreciate the general sobriety and restraint of Bob Rafelson's direction. In view of such previous work as that in *Targets* and *Easy Rider*, one should probably credit the photographer, Laslo Kovacs, with the film's rather crude color sense and its occasional excursions into a flaccid prettiness. The script by Adrien Joyce is probably the principal cause of the blur that is the film's main character, but it also contributes its share of *Five Easy Pieces'* virtues.

And yet I suspect it is not the film's modest virtues—its tact and its seriousness—but rather its chief defect which accounts for its reception. Robert Dupea's alienation is virtually a stimulus to free association, an inkblot onto which, given only an accordance with the general contours of the flight from a somehow culturally overbred family, one can project what one will out of one's own reserves of loss and disaffiliation. It is our ability to project, to identify with the alienated hero, that completes his character; and, for our willingness to identify, the film returns glamor: the glamor of its hero, romantically resigned to his emotional expatriation, his feelings revealing themselves only insofar as they can be expressed in their occasional eruption into violence; and the glamor of this figure's incarnation by the film's leading actor. Were this figure to be looked at more closely, he might be seen in his particularity, but the sense of his glamor would probably not be served, for to look at him closely would inevitably be to throw him open to question. Yet

WILLIAM S. PECHTER'S *book*, Twenty-Four Times a Second, *will be published later this month by Harper & Row.*

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the heroine of *Eclipse* can be seen to be at times both silly and posturing without this in any way diminishing the seriousness of her disaffection. The heroine of *Eclipse* exists for us as a created character, retaining always her inviolable otherness, not inviting identification but demanding a disciplined understanding and compassion. For the creation of and response to a character in a work of art requires finally a kind of rigor; a willingness to maintain critical distance. And it is this, above all, that *Five Easy Pieces* lacks, and that accounts, I think, for the readiness with which people give themselves to it, and the ease with which it gives itself to them in return.

I FIRST became aware of Stuart Rosenberg as one of the house directors on *The Defenders*, where his ham-fisted, emphatic style ably served the essentially editorial purposes of that television show's liberaloid think pieces; for what it was, I enjoyed *The Defenders*, didn't much mind Rosenberg, and thought it, to the extent that I thought about it at all, a compatible marriage of qualities. I first became aware of Paul Newman as a promising young actor in the Marlon Brando mold in films such as *Somebody up There Likes Me*, where, despite the indebtedness to Brando of a kind almost no new actor in the 50's was able to escape, he seemed, for a time, on the verge of realizing a talent and personality distinctively his own. Stuart Rosenberg "met" Paul Newman in *Cool Hand Luke*, a film aptly characterized by Pauline Kael as an exercise in "cut-rate" alienation, and one which remains memorable to me chiefly for my having been asked by the usher to stop laughing or leave the theater during the scene of Jo Van Fleet's delivery, as the hero's mother, of some of the ripest folk-poetry ever uttered on the screen by anyone other than a Mexican peasant; by this time Stuart Rosenberg had left television long enough to have made two unmemorable films before, and Paul Newman had become the expert purveyor of the Paul Newman performance, coasting through films like *The Hustler* and *Hud* on an ingratiating combination of brooding sexuality and facile charm, an actor whose promise seemed increasingly a thing of the long-buried past.

By the time Stuart Rosenberg next met Paul Newman, the former had directed two leaden comedies in *The April Fools* and *Move*, and the latter, apart from the anomaly of one genuinely felt performance in *Winning*, a freshly observed genre film, had solidified his position of before; and, by this time, their encounter had taken on the mythic proportions of Frankenstein meeting the Wolf Man. The issue of that encounter (with Robert Stone's overblown script as midwife) is *WUSA*, and, if it provides still another occasion for observing the extent to which Newman, as an actor, has gone nowhere, it gives one no less some ample grounds for wishing, while watching the director wield the blunt instrument of his style, that Rosenberg had stayed where he belonged. For, bad as *WUSA* is, there is no reason it might not have made for a passable sixty minutes including commercial breaks for toilet and refrigerator, with Ken and Larry Preston defending Anthony Perkins against the charge of murder, and disclosing, in flashback, how Perkins, as a dedicated welfare worker in New Orleans, discovered the evidence of a right-wing conspiracy to "expose" some trumped-up welfare fraud, traced the conspiracy's source to the owner of radio station WUSA, and then, made mad by his own powerlessness, attempted to assassinate him. Which is to say that even such mechanical conventions as those of *The Defenders* might have exerted a needed discipline on what is now a two-hour extravaganza of liberal hysteria—America as a freak show, in wide screen and color, featuring Paul Newman delivering the Paul Newman performance, Joanne Woodward delivering one of the two Joanne Woodward performances (in the other one she has a college education), and Anthony Perkins suffering a severe relapse of the jitters (except for one stunning scene of his confrontation with one of the conspirators in a Playboy Club that is by far the most powerful and unsettling thing in the film).

But, while such discipline might have intensified the paranoid vision of *WUSA* (and it cannot complacently be said that the film's paranoia has no basis in reality), it might have also thrown into relief the wishful fantasy on which the film's action hinges—the assassination of the right-wing leader by a zealot of "humanity." And, at least in its relation to the realities of our political life to date, this is fantasy—a right-wing takeover may arguably be only an extrapolation from what now exists, but, so far, it has been the Martin Luther Kings and not the Carl McIntires who have been assassins' victims. The assassination attempt in *WUSA* fails; one of the leader's flunkies accidentally leans into the path of the bullet; but I think it would be hard to argue that the audience's hopes are not, at that moment, with the assassin, in the wish that he succeed. It cannot, of course, be said that the film in any sense advocates assassination, but since the target is depicted simply as an ogre, and his would-be assassin, however deranged, as one of the film's two sympathetic characters (the other hangs herself in jail; the failed assassin is beaten to death by a right-wing mob), the film, in some sense, does lend sanction to the idea. And it is this fantasy on the part of a film whose discernible political sentiments seem very mild indeed that makes it truly, as it claims, a creation of its times; of a liberalism which flirts with violence and yet can imagine only its own impotence before reprisals; of the Nixon era, and a President who promised to bring us together and acts to tear us apart.

Joe, like *Patton*, enjoys a false reputation for ambiguity, for being assimilable to the views of both Middle America and its dissident borderlands. The method of the two films is vastly different. *Patton*, like *Lawrence of Arabia*, takes a historical figure of some controversial status, and offers, side by side, various contradictory views of him in hopes that, from this indecision, some complexity of characterization will emerge; what emerges is not a complex but an uninterpreted character; the film's

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"ambiguity" is really just ambivalence. And yet, in the case of *Patton,* this failure of the film's makers to "create" a character out of the bundle of vacillating alternatives largely accounts for the film's interest. An "interpreted" Patton, whether from Right or Left, would be insufferably one-dimensional; the film's makers at least allow of two dimensions even if they seem incapable of suggesting three. And what is missing in depth is made up for by the forcefulness of George C. Scott; as in *Lawrence of Arabia,* an actor's personality fills the character's void. But, since Scott's Patton is directed chiefly to a *tour de force* of physical recreation, it, too, manages to sidestep interpretation for all its verve.

For ambivalence, *Joe* substitutes an unselective distaste for middle and marginal Americans alike. Although I have read several reports of audiences of hippies shouting, "Next time we'll get you, Joe," and the like, at the film's personification of hard-hat violence, it's difficult to imagine this response made in any but the spirit in which redneck audiences were said to have cheered the end of *Easy Rider*; that is, not so much in an expression of identification with any portrayal of themselves as one of solidarity in their hostility toward the portrait of an antagonist. The hippies in *Joe*—other than the girls, who are seen solely as drug-dazed victims of their predatory boy friends—are without exception a repellent lot, swindling dealers and thieves. But Joe, from the first moment that we meet him in drunken mid-soliloquy, declaring his hatred for hippies, blacks, and welfare recipients as he sits in the America Bar and Grill, is another matter, and, though it seems clear to me that the film's makers regard him as no less detestable than the hippies he execrates, one can more readily understand the cheers he is reported to have elicited in Queens. Indeed, in the largely hippie audience in which I saw the film, it was Joe alone who drew sympathetic laughter. In part, this was simply because he is so clearly a version of that archetypal sympathetic American figure, the deflator of cultural pretensions. But also because, in the absence of other values, theatricality takes on a positive value of its own. And, much as I found myself, in the context of *Patton,* "rooting" for the gunslinging general, a figure whose actual counterpart I hardly admire, so, too, does Joe, in Peter Boyle's shrewd performance, become, by liveliness alone, the most likable character in a film which ends with his committing mass murder.

The trouble is that, given the purposes of the film, which are essentially exploitative of group fears and animosities, the character of Joe both gets out of hand and isn't allowed room enough. The film's clever premise—that Joe, the $160-a-week factory worker, should run into a flabby, $60,000-a-year advertising executive who has just unintentionally murdered a hippie, and that a relationship between the two should form from Joe's admiration for the killer—isn't sustained even at its own cheap level, and the film soon runs down into familiar genre comedy—the advertising man and his wife to Joe's house in Astoria for dinner, and a pot party with the two men and some hippies they encounter while searching for the ad man's runaway daughter that seems right out of *The Bachelor Party.* By the time the film ends, as cleverly, and cheaply, as it began, its force has already been spent, and the fact of the ad man accidentally killing his daughter in a group of hippies that he and Joe slaughter seems less neat contrivance than desperate gimmick.

And yet this skillfully made and thoroughly meretricious film does have some force to spend, and even a certain kind of unusual excitement. Joe may be a caricature as he sits in his kitchen after work, belching over his beer, and asking his wife how things went that day on *Secret Storm,* but one watches with a considerable sense of missed opportunities, and of an authentic and (in films) fresh character latent but never quite allowed to emerge; a character of real (if extra-aesthetic) importance, and one whose alienation is such as to make Robert Dupea's pale by comparison. This is the true American lumpen man; leveler of cultural distinctions but respecter of social ones; the victim who zealously defends his victimizers; who chews the bone of welfare recipients while his income is being eaten up by a defense department; who has been dealt the drug of patriotism. This character isn't likable, though he could be sympathetic, but he probably wouldn't require the filmmakers' sympathy, only their artistic intelligence, in order to exist; indeed the film's "coldness" needn't have been a liability; given a Buñuel, a disinterestedly ferocious comedy of the slaughter of the longhairs by the short (and vice versa) might be considerably more salubrious than such sentimental and/or hysterical paranoid fantasies as we have been getting. Certainly the Joe who never quite comes to life in this film would be at the center of that one. He already speaks a line from it when he says, "You ever get the feeling that everything you do—your whole life—is one big crock of shit?"

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Desire & Gratification

THE RAPE OF TAMAR. By DAN JACOBSON. *Macmillan. 224 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by HERBERT N. SCHNEIDAU

ONE DANGER is that Dan Jacobson's new novel will be taken by those who do not know his earlier books as a costume drama or a laboriously researched period piece. The narrator (Yonadab, King David's petty-courtier nephew and Amnon's "friend") has anticipated this particular danger: "I don't intend to linger over our furniture, our clothes (broad vertical stripes in purple and white were very fashionable in my day, I might mention in passing), our utterly inadequate sewage systems, our weapons, our games, our primitive sacral rites, and all the rest of the ethnographical junk you may be glumly expecting me to inflict upon you." Another danger is that those who give themselves the pleasure of reading the book will enjoy it simply as a *tour de force,* an archaic tale wittily told in a modern idiom. But *The Rape of Tamar,* while certainly all that, is more: indeed, it is a mordant presentation of the timeless structures of desire and gratification, as well as an implicit comment on the way these structures illuminate the nature of politics in our own world today.

The tragedy of Amnon and Tamar (II Samuel 13) is the classic statement in the Biblical tradition of the post-coital *tristitia* that makes a hollow mockery of the importunate lover. "Then," says the Bible after Amnon, the son of David, has raped his sister Tamar, "Amnon hated her with very great hatred; so that the hatred with with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her." Shakespeare in speaking of lust simply condenses: "Past reason hunted, and no sooner had/Past reason hated." But it is not only Amnon's vanity *(vanus,* empty) that is exposed when he uncovers his sister's nakedness: the whole miasma of desires—including his father David's and his brother Absalom's and even Tamar's—that surrounds the rape and revenge is shown to be but a shadow. Considered on this level, Jacobson's retelling of the story is a chilling reexamination of the vanity of human wishes. As Melville's Ishmael says, " 'All is vanity.' ALL. This wilful world hath not got hold of unchristian Solomon's wisdom yet." We have not yet, truly; the current notion seems to be that desires are legitimated by their force: if someone demands something loudly enough you should give it to him. But the barrenness of Amnon's passion reminds us—just as Jacobson wishes it to do—of the old saying that you should think carefully about what you want most because you're so likely to get it.

THERE IS a tragic aspect, certainly, to wasted and broken lives, futile struggles of father and son, disorder radiating from throne-room throughout kingdom. But horrors, as we know, can be funny: like the maiden in the Song of Songs, Jacobson's humor is black but beautiful. Amnon's death-scene in particular is unequaled in contemporary fiction since Humbert Humbert put guilty Quilty to his purgation. Absalom had planned a majestic assassination, almost a sacrifice, but his followers bungled it into a Keystone-Kops romp. After an uproarious series of misadventures in laying hold of Amnon, the thugs corner him under a table. "His executioners prodded and fished about beneath the table as if after a cowering, recalcitrant dog they were trying to drive out of a room. Finally they lifted the table bodily and threw it aside; but Amnon held one of the chairs over his head, tugging it down like a hat over his ears, while blows rained down on his back and two of the attackers tried to wrest the chair from him. The two men heaved at the chair, Amnon clung to its legs; they might have been insane bargain hunters fighting for possession of it."

Such a death suits a man whose grand passion for incest turns out, the morning after, to be not shameful but just empty to him. Amnon's crude attempt to seduce his half-sister, tempting her with metaphysical visions of human laws outdared, is so stunningly inept as to make clear that rape, not submission, is what he's really seeking. Simone Weil called the *Iliad* the "poem of force," reading it as a fearful homage to that power by which one human compels or humiliates another. With a similar insight, Jacobson shows us that his story is shot through with the secret attractiveness of using force. Thus he brilliantly resolves the problem in the biblical text caused by Amnon's insistence on force even when Tamar appears willing (if it can be cleared with David, and she's sure it can be). Still more shrewdly, Jacobson portrays Amnon's juvenile fantasy of power-through-violence as basically envious and imitative; it develops that his desire was born in the moment when he saw David and Absalom, his powerful rivals, look lustfully at Tamar. (For more on the point of "imitative" desire, see René Girard's *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel.)*

"Princes do what we dream," Yonadab realizes, but they are thus not masters so much as "slaves and bondsmen, compelled to act out every whim of ours, every fleeting impulse, every lewd desire. . . ." Amnon is the obvious case of a man tempted to ruin by vertiginous freedom, his self-conception as a prince making it inevitable that he will act out his fantasy. But David and Absalom are equally examples. David, in this version of events, is acting out a fanatic's dream of rule, from goatherd to king. Absalom's power-

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fantasy is more troublesome since David is in the way, so he masks it with radical chic. He makes himself known as "left-wing prince and landowner, radical millionaire, aristocratic populist": thus stealing the hearts of men of Israel.

> For Absalom was—excuse me—a progressive. He was a hater of injustice. An enemy of established authority of every kind, not least that of his father and the priests. A friend of the poor. A bold planner of schemes for the redistribution of land, new codes of law, new methods of government. A maximizer of happiness. A firm believer in the future . . . [which] would somehow retrospectively balance up or cancel out all the evils and pains of the past; it would give meaning to them, prove them to have been ultimately worthwhile. It goes almost without saying that that would apply in particular to any evils Absalom himself might have to commit in order to bring the future about.

Yonadab is clever enough to see that although Absalom and David are implacable enemies, they are fundamentally the same. The son is his father's image: he is "the man, in short, who wanted to be David . . . just like the daddy he would have to kill in order to become king." These brilliant characterizations should need no further comment, except perhaps to wonder if they're not more timely than timeless.

FINALLY, it should be observed that Jacobson gets more fun and profit out of his narrator than many better-known novelists ever manage to do with theirs. Yonadab is a supreme creation; in the abstract a mere figure of envious, impotent, voyeuristic desire, he is still the most substantial character in the book (much as he doubts his own substantiality). Condemned to a Sartrean hell of himself, he must suffer the further indignity of acting as a guide for groups of tourists—us—through this hell. In some way he is a permutation of guided tours of the holy places. The conception of Yonadab is in fact the most nihilistic, ironic statement in Jacobson's set of put-downs.

Jacobson sets an example not only for current fiction, with its obsessive wrestling with "historical truth," but also for imaginative responding to the Bible, a way not limited to the suffocating pieties of orthodoxy nor to the carefully limited insights of scholarship. The more you know about the Bible, the more resonant Jacobson's book becomes. Consider simply Yonadab's "revelation" that the Court Historian, he who wrote the essence of II Samuel and thus invented history, was Abiathar: when you know what happened to Abiathar under Solomon, you realize how *The Rape of Tamar* points forward: for while Abiathar was inventing history, Solomon was importing a "culture" for Israel, and we have lived in uneasy tension between history and culture ever since. The eventual outgrowth of Abiathar's history was the Bible itself, and the Bible, as we should know, is most ambivalent, sometimes frankly hostile, to culture, deeply questioning its innate tendencies to pride. Moreover, secular history cannot tolerate mythologized culture heroes any better than biblical history: it will judge the Kennedys as surely as Jacobson (and Abiathar before him) has judged the Davidides. As Yonadab notes, "Before Abiathar the illustrious slept more peacefully in their caves and groves and pyramids than they have been allowed to since."

No Joking Matter

YOU MIGHT AS WELL LIVE: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DOROTHY PARKER. By JOHN KEATS. *Simon and Schuster. 319 pp. $7.50.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH EPSTEIN

FREUD SAID there were no jokes and, as usual, wasn't kidding. One likes to think that this time out he was wrong, but in the case of Dorothy Parker, at any rate, the remark is deadly accurate. The wittiest woman writer America has ever had, Dorothy Parker appears rarely to have written or cracked a line, no matter how brilliantly clever, that at bottom she didn't seriously mean, or that didn't in some way express her bleak view of the world. In the 20's, when she came up pregnant and had to have an abortion, she was quoted as saying, "It serves me right for putting all my eggs in one bastard." Funny, but, in the context of her sad life, also not so funny. In his biography, John Keats notes that "hers was the laughter of disdain." The truth of the matter is, when Dorothy Parker's wit had most sting, it was usually supplied by the whip of her own extreme self-loathing.

ALTHOUGH a very uneven performance, Mr. Keats's biography offers a good deal of interesting and carefully researched material and does not attempt to hide any of its subject's soiled linen in closets or under the bed. Mr. Keats's defects are those of sensibility and literary training. His biography has many passages guaranteed to make one wince—as, for example, when he labels Dorothy Parker an "existentialist," or when he quotes Hamlet ("The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King") to explain the motive behind her few lame attempts to write for the theater. He also badly overrates her writing, calling her poetry as good as Edna St. Vincent Millay's and her best short stories the equal of Hemingway's. Neither, of course, is true, which Dorothy Parker herself knew even if her biographer doesn't. Mr. Keats is at his best when he is farthest away from literary matters and is tracking down the authenticity of an anecdote or chronicling the chaos of Dorothy Parker's life.

Of the latter there was no shortage. What little order Dorothy Parker had in her life went into her writing and, as is well known, her literary output was slight. For the rest, there were mainly long stretches of disaster punctuated by periods of depression and remorse. "Mongrel" was the title Dorothy Parker had in mind for the autobiography she never got around to writing. Born Dorothy Rothschild in 1893, she was the daughter of a well-to-do New York garment mer-

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JOSEPH EPSTEIN, *a frequent contributor, reviewed Pauline Kael's* Going Steady *in our September 1970 number.*

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chant. Her mother died before Dorothy was a year old. Her father, who appears to have been a man of towering insensitivity, next married a woman whom she could never bring herself to call mother or even stepmother, and in later life could barely mention without almost lapsing into apoplexy. Although her father was Jewish her mother was not, and so her stepmother sent Dorothy off to a Catholic school, where she was made to feel different and out of it. She had a brother and a sister, but both were considerably older, and she apparently never connected with either. As a child, she had no friends, she played no childish games—she had, in effect, no childhood.

GIVEN this dismal beginning, Dorothy Parker's almost immediate success once out in the world must have seemed puzzling to her. In her early twenties, she had a poem accepted at *Vogue* by Frank Crowninshield, who offered her a job as a caption writer at $10 a week. The following year, 1917, she moved over to the staff at *Vanity Fair*, a magazine which was then, as Mr. Keats puts it, the nation's *arbiter elegantiarum*. She was soon joined at *Vanity Fair* by Robert Benchley and Robert Sherwood, the three of whom took to lunching at the nearby Algonquin hotel. What was to become famous as the Round Table was shortly filled in by Franklin Pierce Adams, Alexander Woollcott, and Harold Ross. During its height, other Round Table regulars included Heywood Broun, Deems Taylor, George S. Kaufman, Donald Ogden Stewart, Harpo Marx, Douglas Fairbanks, Jascha Heifetz, and Herbert Bayard Swope. Frank Sullivan and George Jean Nathan were less regular members of the group, and when in town the Baltimore Bad Boy, H. L. Mencken himself, would occasionally put in an appearance.

The Algonquin wits, as the Round Table group was called, have been soaking in the rich gravy of myth for years. Perhaps this is not so startling, for American writers have long hungered for, and seem so rarely to have achieved, a sense of artistic and intellectual community. In point of fact, the Round Table appears to have supplied neither. Far from having much of the content of art or intellect, it took its character from the theater and the performing arts, from show business and smart journalism. The Algonquin wits, as F. W. Dupee has remarked, were committed to the spectator's role, and to making it pay, both in money and in anecdotes. Toward the end of her life Dorothy Parker told a reporter:

> People romanticize it. . . . It was no Mermaid Tavern, I promise you. There were no giants. Think of who was writing in those days —Lardner, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, and Hemingway. Those were the real giants. The Round Table was just a lot of people telling jokes and telling people how good they were. . . . I remember hearing Woollcott say, "reading Proust is like lying in someone else's dirty bath water." And then he'd go into ecstasy about something called "Valiant Is the Word for Carrie," and I knew I'd had enough of the Round Table.

Yet it was at the Round Table that Dorothy Parker first acquired her reputation—a reputation for being a consummate put-down artist. She came divinely equipped for the job—just five feet tall, plumpish in an attractive way, with lush dark hair and wonderfully large eyes. Woollcott once described her as a combination of Little Nell and Lady Macbeth. When the name of a much-talked-about woman came up in conversation, she would demurely murmur, seeming all admiration, "You know, that woman speaks eighteen languages? And she can't say 'No' in any of them." She kept a bird, a canary, whom she called Onan because he spilled his seeds on the floor. She had the consistently low view of people that is available only to those who have a consistently low view of themselves.

Dorothy Parker knew what advantages she was entitled to as a woman. Her wit, for example, was altogether feminine, at least in the sense that her best lines depended on a female voice for successful delivery: so much so that many of them, if gotten off by a man, would not be merely unfunny but would clearly merit a fist in the face. She also knew something about female vulnerabilities. Her own list was headed by men. "Her taste in men was, indeed, bad, even for writer ladies," her friend Lillian Hellman has said. "I require only three things of a man," Dorothy Parker once remarked. "He must be handsome, ruthless, and stupid." This, too, was no joke. After her first marriage to a stockbroker named Edwin Parker broke up, she flopped from man to man, without much discernment. "She had been loved by several remarkable men," according to Miss Hellman, "but she loved only the ones who did not love her, and they were the shabby ones." In her thirties, a young man fresh out of Yale, a celebrity-hunting stud, was bruiting it about New York that she had given him "the treatment." As he told it: "It was excellent. She knew all the tricks."

WHERE SELF-HATE runs deep, self-destruction is usually not far behind. By her early thirties, Dorothy Parker had twice attempted suicide, once by slashing her wrists, the second time by an overdose of sleeping pills. "Dottie," Robert Benchley is reported to have said after her second attempt, "if you don't stop this sort of thing you'll make yourself sick." Benchley, a very decent man, was the first of a number of people who, as Mr. Keats puts it, "were beginning to discover that a certain part of their lives would have to be devoted to helping her through her own." Odd how people who live with true abandon somehow always manage to cultivate others who stand ready to help clean up the mess they leave. Odd, too, how the really self-destructive often do not self-destruct. From her middle twenties on, Dorothy Parker breakfasted on whiskey sours and drank at a good clip through most of the day and night; she practically chewed Chesterfields; her entire life was untainted by any sort of regularity, not to speak of organization—and she survived to the age of seventy-three.

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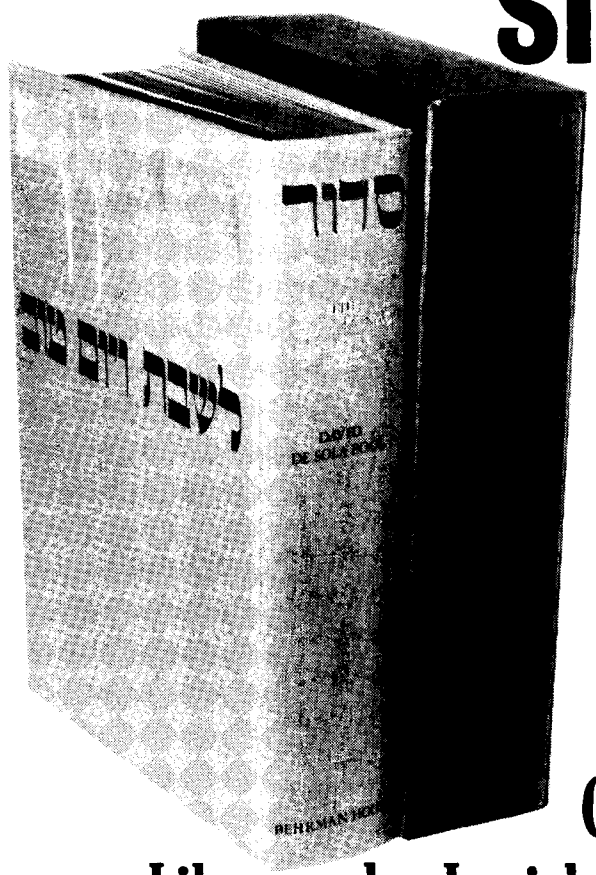

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Yet the way she lived left its scars. By her mid-thirties she began to run to alcoholic fat. Her photographs show the too-quick transformation from a plump gamine to a pudgy matron. In 1933, after securing a reputation initially established through clever talk by publishing some of her best short stories and bringing out a volume of verse that was to go through eight printings, she married for a second time. She was now forty; her new husband, Alan Campbell, was a Southerner, a half-Jew like herself, a Broadway actor, very handsome, and eleven years younger. It was a strange coupling, involving, insofar as one can make out, more in the way of mutual dependence than clear strong feeling. She was to divorce Alan Campbell, then remarry him three years later. More than once she accused him of being a homosexual. The marriage was not your usual TV family-situation comedy.

THE year she married Campbell, the two of them moved out to Hollywood. There, at the height of the Depression, they earned $5,200 a week as a screenwriting team. As for so many others, the 30's marked her politicization. She once told Vincent Sheean she was a Communist, though her Communism often took bizarre turns. Once for example, she joined a walk-out of waiters at the Waldorf only to cross a picket line shortly afterward to join Heywood Broun for a drink at "21." Her politics may have been contradictory, but unlike the case with the current adherents of radical chic, they were not unserious: during this period she chucked many old friends, Robert Benchley among them, for no better reason than that they did not share her political views. Her politics also turned out to have serious consequences. During the McCarthy era, she appeared on a list of some three hundred actors, writers, and directors suspected of being Communist by the studios. Her attitude toward the House Un-American Activities Committee was one of total disdain, and that group's own extraordinary activities only seemed to

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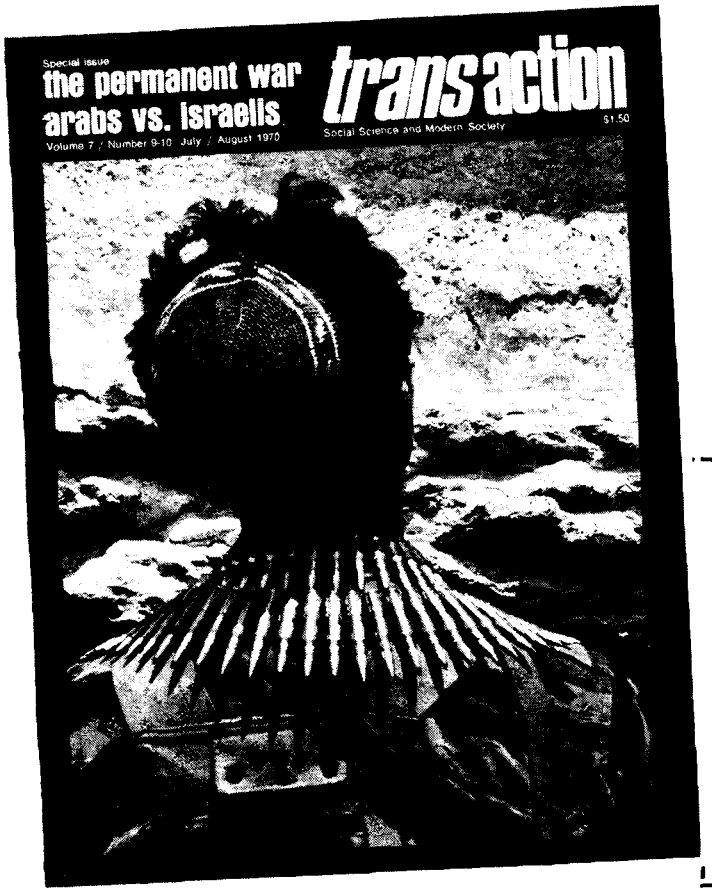

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confirm her in the rightness of her radicalism.

The 30's, the time of Dorothy Parker's greatest fame and wealth, also marked her decline. After the Spanish Civil War, which she had traveled off to view firsthand, and the Soviet Union's pact with Hitler, which left her trapped in an ideological maze as it had many others, it seemed that her life was destined to be one long ride to hell in a very slow handcart. Earlier, at forty-two, she had become pregnant, and had put great stock in the possibility of having a child, but then she miscarried, and another hope was dashed.

Everything she touched turned to crud. Her marriage to Alan Campbell broke up; an attempt to write for Broadway failed; she wrote almost no successful fiction, and felt guilty about neglecting her talent. She went back with Campbell for a second go, both at marriage and at screenwriting, but neither came to much. For a time they lived on their unemployment checks, till *Esquire* came along to offer her $750 a month to do a book-review column. Her copy was certainly less regular than *Esquire*'s checks, and she often found herself having to lie to the magazine's editors about having sent her piece off in the mails days ago. Her drinking, heavy for years, increased; more nights than not she and Campbell, after a full schedule of boozing, would straggle off to bed in an alcoholic haze. Then on the morning of June 14, 1963, she woke up to find Alan Campbell in the bed next to her—dead. Having taken sleeping pills after booze, he had apparently thrown up in his sleep and strangled on his own vomit.

Dorothy Parker's last years provided no let-up; they were a tortured coda to a life of pain. They were lived, in the main, in an alcoholic fog. She moved into New York's Volney Hotel, where most of her time was spent drinking and talking to her poodle. Mr. Keats cites her greeting to one of her visitors at the Volney: "Jew-hating Fascist son of a bitch"; she greeted two other visitors with, "You're Jew-Fascists. Get out of here." All the old wounds, the old hates and self-hates, rattled confusedly round in her mind. Strangely enough, whatever her state of physical and mental decay, photographs taken of her in her seventies show a delicate and rather elegant elderly woman. Although the alcoholic fog thickened, there were moments when she stepped out from behind it to demonstrate flashes of the old brilliance: a woman I know who spent an evening with her during these last years recalls her quietly announcing that Malcolm Cowley looked like an atheist's idea of God.

In 1967, at the age of seventy-three, she was found dead in her room at the Volney, booze bottles and dog crap strewn about the floor and checks amounting to more than $10,000 in a bureau drawer. There is something hideous and yet something appropriate about this. Dorothy Parker was a hotel person—one of the earth's permanent temporaries. She is today, and probably always will be, most closely identified with the Algonquin. In earlier years, at the end of her various love affairs, she liked to take a large suite at the Plaza, where a week or so of living as a *grande dame* rejuvenated her for her next inevitable defeat. With her taste for the macabre, she used to tell people how when a person died at the Volney the corpse was taken to a back elevator which was so small that it had to be stood upright to be taken down into the lobby. That, presumably, is how she went down herself.

At her funeral Lillian Hellman said: "She was part of nothing and nobody except herself [and] it was this independence of mind and spirit that was her true distinction." There is not much else to say: no lesson to be derived, no moral to be drawn, from such a life. Out of seventy-three years of nearly complete personal disaster, there remains a handful of nice stories, some wickedly funny lines, and a few magnificent gestures. It is worth remembering that in her will Dorothy Parker left all her money to Martin Luther King.

"Normalizing" the Jews

The Wineskin and the Wizard: The Problem of Jewish Power in the Context of East European Jewish History. By Michael Selzer. *Macmillan. 241 pp. $6.95.*

Zionism Reconsidered: The Rejection of Jewish Normalcy. Edited by Michael Selzer. *Macmillan. 257 pp. $6.95.*

Reviewed by Hillel Halkin

The astonishing Mr. Selzer is at it again. Three years ago he presented us with a modest volume entitled *The Aryanization of the Jewish State,* in which he sought to demonstrate that the State of Israel was the creation of a small but determined band of anti-Semitic conspirators from Eastern Europe whose sinister scheme it has been to remake the Jewish people in the image of the Gentiles and to perpetrate "cultural genocide" upon their unfortunate brethren from the Sefardic and Oriental communities of Asia and North Africa.* Now, in *The Wineskin and The Wizard,* Mr. Selzer has moved on to the high ground of theology and world history. His thesis, in keeping with his native talents, is simple. Whereas Zionism represents Jewish consciousness as the will to secular power, "the traditional Jewish commitment has been to powerlessness." True, powerlessness invites oppression, but oppression is precisely what being Jewish is about. "To be a Jew is to be afraid . . . [It] means to feel a frightful intimacy with our ancestors in their suffering; it means to live with the fear of persecution and discrimination; it means to anticipate the most devastating calamities in the future, if not for ourselves, then for our progeny." Because Zionism has sought to put an end to this situation, it must be viewed as "a collective abandonment of Jewish standards and the acceptance of majority ones in their place." Moreover, the Zion-

Hillel Halkin *is a writer and translator now living in Jerusalem. Mr. Halkin's article, "Hebrew As She Is Spoke," appeared in our December 1969 issue.*

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ist apostasy threatens the future existence not only of Judaism but of the Jewish people as well, for "one of the most startling paradoxes of Jewish history" is that "the ability of Jewish communities to survive seems to be in inverse proportion to the amount of physical and political power they enjoy."

Not the least startling feature of this paradox, of course, is that historically it is demonstrably false, but history, it turns out, is not really one of Mr. Selzer's strong points after all. Indeed, the case with which he defends his proposition that power and survival have been mutually exclusive forces throughout the course of Jewish history is so patently specious that it hardly deserves serious refutation. Ignoring obvious examples of Jewish communities that flourished for centuries despite their enjoyment of impressive amounts of physical and political power, such as those of the First and Second Temple periods or the Jews of Babylonia under the Parthian Empire during the Talmudic age, and of others for whom the sudden loss of all physical and political power spelled equally sudden extinction, such as the Jews of Spain in 1492 or those of Eastern Europe during World War II, Selzer offers as polar paradigms for his equation of two Jewish communities from the early and late Middle Ages. The first are the Jews of Khazaria, that obscure Turkish kingdom that held sway along the banks of the Volga between the 7th and 13th centuries, during which time, for reasons that are still largely a matter for historical speculation, it adopted Judaism as a state religion; the second, the Jewry of Poland and Western Russia as it was organized during much of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries into the Council of the Four Lands, a self-governing body that was granted extensive home rule by the Polish crown in matters social, religious, and economic. Since the ultimate fall of Khazaria to its Moslem and Byzantine rivals left behind no historically identifiable Jewish community to carry on in its

* See the review in these pages by Shlomo Avineri, December 1967—Ed.

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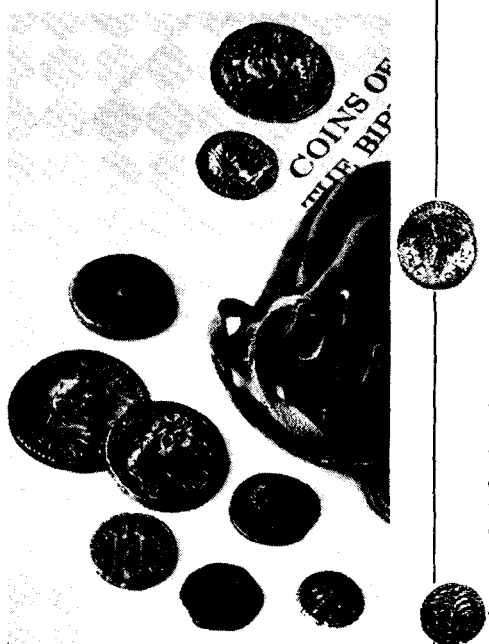

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The shekel was originally a unit of weight. The Hebrews coined their first metal money about 139-138 B.C.E. and gave the name "shekel" to a coin of that weight. This shekel, inscribed "Jerusalem the Holy" and showing a chalice from the Temple, is believed to have been struck during the first Revolt of the Jews from 66-70 C.E. The branch of three pomegranates in transition from flower to fruit is the most famous of ancient Judaean coin symbols.

QUARTER SHEKEL
132-135 C.E.
The quarter-shekel, with its grape cluster, shows how prominently vineyards figure in Biblical history, both in a real and symbolic sense. References to vineyards and their fruit occur throughout the Bible, widely used for parables and poetic imagery.
This was a coin of the Second Jewish Revolt. Quarter-shekels were struck over Roman coins, sometimes with the original design showing through. The reverse shows trumpets, and is inscribed "Deliverance of Jerusalem."

LEPTON OF CAPONIUS (Widow's Mite)
6-9 C.E.
This Greek bronze coin was probably the "mite" referred to in the New Testament (Luke 21). It was the smallest coin known to and used by the Jews.

STATER OF ANTIOCH
27 B.C.E.-14 C.E.
The Stater was a silver coin used widely in pre-Christian Palestine. One side shows the Emperor Augustus, the other a female figure, the Tyche of Antioch, the River Orontes at her feet.

DENARIUS OF TRAJAN
98-117 C.E.
This penny was current in Palestine after the fall of the Second Temple. During the reign of the Emperor Trajan, a major revolt was undertaken by Palestinian Jews against Roman oppression.

LEPTA OF HERODES AGRIPPA
37-44 C.E.
This coin records the death of Herodes Agrippa. He was the grandson of Herod the Great, rewarded with Judaea for his assistance to the Emperor Claudius.

JUDEA CAPTA (Coin of Vespasian)
70 C.E.
The prophet Isaiah foretold the fall of Jerusalem in the First Revolt of 70 C.E. This is one of several coins struck in Palestine by the Romans to remind the Jews of their defeat. A weeping woman is shown with head bowed, seated beside a date palm (symbol of Judaea). Obverse shows the emperor, with the Latin inscription, "Imperator Caesar Vespasianus Augustus."

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place, Selzer regards this as proof positive that "Jewish experiments with political sovereignty have [always] been unsuccessful and ephemeral." The Council of the Four Lands, on the other hand, stood, he asserts, for "a radically different mode of Jewish existence . . . one which did not seek mundane power as its guarantor but which was built around a complete acceptance of the utter powerlessness of Jewish life." To this acceptance of powerlessness, Selzer claims, belongs the credit for the rich religious culture that developed among Polish Jewry and that formed the basis of what has come to be known today as the East-European Jewish heritage.

SELZER's descriptions of both the Jewish Khazars and the Council of the Four Lands bear virtually no resemblance to historical reality. Regarding the Jewishness of the Khazars, of course, so little is known that it is possible to argue almost anything, but two points at least, neither of which is compatible with Selzer's thesis, are generally agreed on. First, even at the height of their influence Jews constituted a small minority of the total population of Khazaria, which could therefore be called a "Jewish kingdom" in a formal sense only (i.e., the official allegiance of the royal house). Secondly, the Jewish Khazars did not simply disappear into thin air after the fall of the empire that had sheltered them; some no doubt converted to Christianity or Islam, but many others must have migrated southward and westward to merge with the Jewish communities of the Caucasus, which continue to exist to this day. In effect, far from being a Jewish experiment with political sovereignty, the kingdom of the Khazars represented an experiment of political sovereignty with Judaism, and one that certainly cannot be said to have been an unqualified failure for either side (the kingdom did after all maintain itself against powerful enemies for over half a millennium).

Even more distorted is Selzer's picture of the Council of the Four Lands. Indeed, historians of East-European Jewry have made it abundantly clear that the Council was ridden by continual struggles for power from the day it was born, as might be expected of any body that attempted to administer the daily lives of tens of thousands of people. The wealthier communities within it fought each other for dominance and then banded together against the poorer communities that demanded their share of the wealth; individual fought individual, family fought family, and faction fought faction for pride of place, commercial monopolies, and tax-farming privileges; the Council's secular arm fought its rabbinical arm for executive supremacy; and finally, the Council's representatives in the Polish court fought as best they could to protect Jewish financial and religious interests as a whole. True, the Council of the Four Lands never sought to declare itself an independent state, and this Selzer seems to interpret as an "acceptance of utter powerlessness." One might as well argue that blacks in the United States are indifferent to the use of power because they have not yet seriously attempted to establish a black republic or to stage a coup in the White House.

For what after all is power? It is the ability to influence or control one's environment for good or for bad, and of this political sovereignty is only one form, although admittedly among the potentially most lethal. Had Selzer understood this elementary distinction he might have spared himself and his readers a good deal of nonsense, without in the least having to compromise himself as an anti-Zionist; for what was new about Zionism in Jewish life was not its interest in power—Jews have always had an interest in power, like human beings everywhere—but rather its aim of attaining it through the agency of a Jewish state. Indeed, one of the more accurate perceptions of Zionist thought was that as power in the modern world became more and more concentrated in the hands of the nation-state, the non-sovereign means by which Jews had traditionally exercised a modicum of counter-power to defend themselves stood to be increasingly threatened. Ultimately these were annihilated completely, with consequences the enormity of which no one could have been expected to foresee. But Mr. Selzer has a message for the victims of these consequences too. They did not, he assures us, die in vain, because "Judaism rejects power" and because "without the Jew, man would have no symbol of man-inflicted suffering. . . . The mission idea *functions*. . . . If there had been no Jews to memorialize, we may well have dismissed the entire Nazi trauma with a mere shrug of the shoulders . . ." [!]

MR. SELZER fortunately is not to be taken seriously. The same cannot be said, however, of a number of the figures whose essays appear in his recently published anthology, *Zionism Reconsidered: The Rejection of Jewish Normalcy*. The selections in this volume fall for the most part into three groups. The first of these may be identified with that wing of extreme Orthodoxy that has been irreconcilably opposed to Zionism since its inception as an eschatological heresy, an attempt to "hasten the end," in the words of the Hebrew phrase, and so usurp God's exclusive privilege to determine Jewish destiny. A second group numbers two Hebrew thinkers, Ahad Ha'am and Yehezkel Kaufmann, who were Zionists themselves but had serious reservations about the tactics and ideology of political Zionism; their inclusion in a volume whose overall contents they would have violently rejected would seem to be a matter of questionable propriety. (It is certainly ironic to see Ahad Ha'am presented on the same "team" as the English Reform leader Claude Montefiore, whose views on Judaism he so scathingly attacked in a well-known essay.) The third and largest group is composed of a type of semi- or wholly-assimilated modern Jewish intellectual that Isaac Deutscher, in an essay here reprinted, has called "the non-Jewish Jew," and includes, besides Deutscher himself, Morris Raphael Cohen, Hans Kohn, Hannah Arendt, and David Ries-

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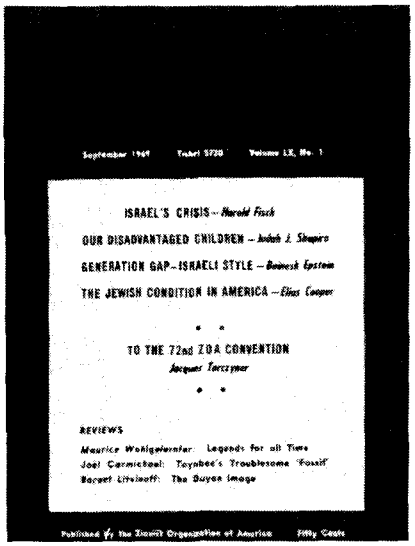
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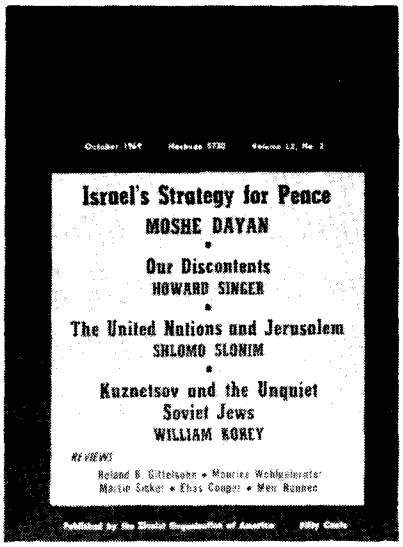

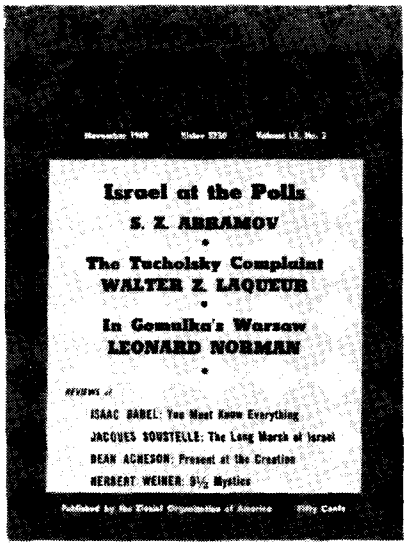

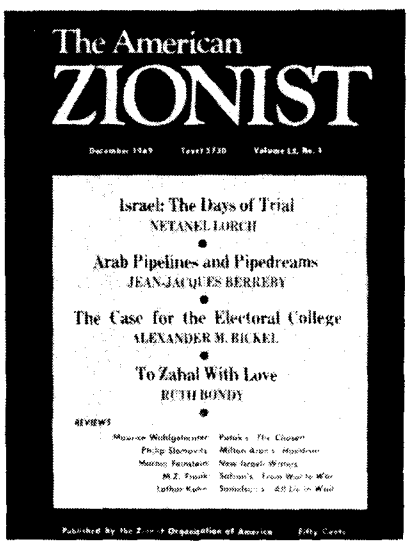

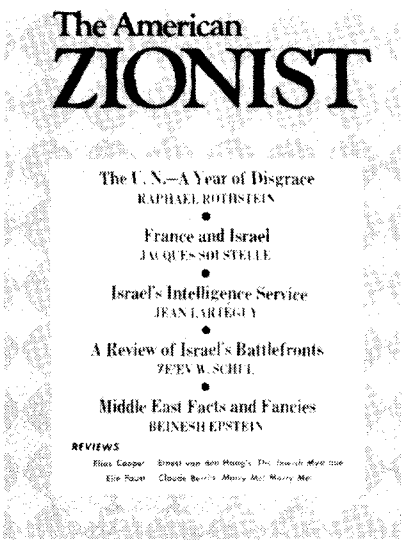

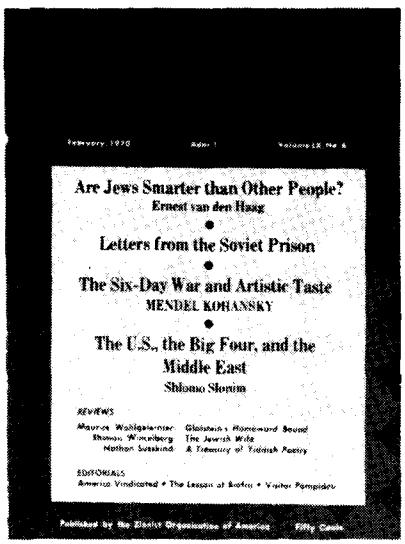
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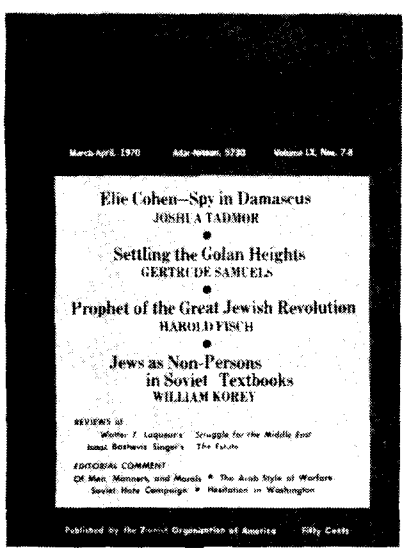

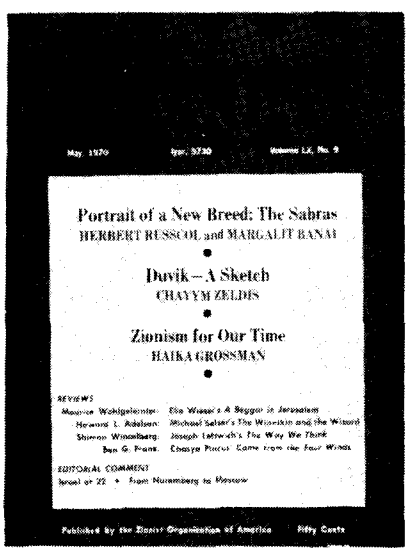

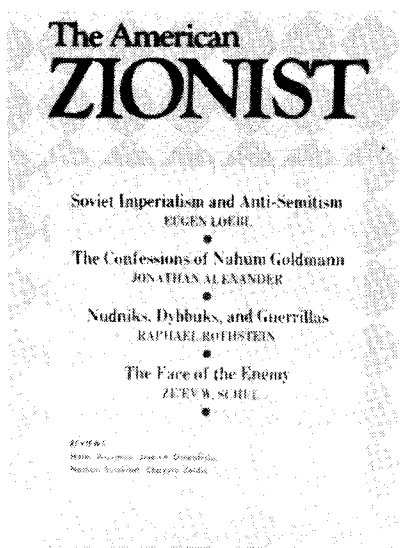

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man. This last group is also the most interesting, both because of its indisputable intellectual stature, and because, in regard to Zionism if nothing else, its members share a common set of assumptions that have come to be identified with *the* anti-Zionist position by most Jewish intellectuals in the West today.

"The Jewish heretic who transcends Jewry," writes Deutscher in *The Non-Jewish Jew*, "belongs to a Jewish tradition," of which he proceeds to give his version of the familiar pantheon: Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, and Freud. That such a tradition in the broad sense does exist, and that there are historical explanations that can help to account for it, is beyond doubt, but it is worth pointing out that as Jewish traditions go it is not a very old one. Apart from Spinoza, who historically is a category in himself, it is a product of the Enlightenment that does not go back earlier than the 19th century, while in its more mythicized version of the Jew as a romantic culture-hero of alienation, it is a considerably later development even than that. None of the essayists in *Zionism Reconsidered* subscribes to the more banal aspects of this myth, but all join in conceiving of the Jewish role in Western history as ideally being that of the permanent outsider, dwelling, as Deutscher puts it, "on the borderline of various civilizations . . . in society and yet not in it, of it and yet not of it," a unique cross-pollinating carrier, as it were, without which the host-cultures of Europe and America would have borne the poorer fruit. Since Zionism aspires to eliminate this extraordinarily productive marginality in the name of a "normalization" of Jewish existence with its inevitable leveling down of the characteristic intensity of Jewish intellectual life, all view it with varying degrees of hostility or distrust.

One of the peculiarities of this position is that though its proponents have commonly identified themselves with the liberal or socialist Left, it has a curiously elitist ring. Marx, Trotsky, and Freud may indeed represent the flowering of the Jewish spirit at its fullest (though this too, one trusts, is not beyond debate), but is the production of future Marxes, Trotskys, and Freuds really to be the sole standard by which millions of less exceptional Jewish lives and deaths are to be measured? One searches in vain through the pages of *Zionism Reconsidered* for mention of the fact that when Zionism first appeared as a serious force in Jewish life toward the end of the 19th century, the great masses of European Jews were already frantically seeking to "normalize" their lives as best they could—whether through assimilation, emigration to America, or the gospel of proletarian internationalism—and that the great ideological debate within the Jewish community between Zionism and Socialism was not over the desirability of "normalization"—only the Orthodox disputed *this*—but over how it might be most rationally and authentically carried out. It is one thing, after all, to choose the burden of abnormality for oneself; it is quite another to choose it for others who may not want it, as do Miss Arendt and Messrs. Deutscher, Riesman, Kohn, and Cohen.

In his introduction to *Zionism Reconsidered*, Selzer quotes with relish a remark made to Franz Rosenzweig by the German-Jewish philosopher Hermann Cohen, who said of the Zionists: "Those bums, they want to be *happy*!" I must confess that the more I ponder the infinite superciliousness of these words, the more merciless an indictment of their speaker they seem to become. Can so natural and universal a desire really be so contemptible? Presumably Cohen would not have reviled it among Danes, Finns, Serbs, or Congolese. Much is written in the essays included in this anthology about Zionism's arrogant nationalism and tribalist particularism; but which is ultimately the greater arrogance and which the more tribalistic, the insistence that Jews are somehow above the ordinary range of human business and concerns, or the belief that this revolt against one's common humanity is, and always has been in Jewish history, at once a tragically self-flattering and self-denying illusion? One wonders.

Beyond Words

WORDS FOR A DEAF DAUGHTER. By PAUL WEST. *Harper and Row. 188 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by JOHANNA KAPLAN

WHAT CAN YOU SAY of a man who writes a book celebrating the deafness of his own child? Or of a culture that accepts and applauds such a book on its own terms? This book and its reception assume the kind of inversion of values we slide over from familiarity and from the fear of being thought unsophisticated: deaf is better, though it's obviously worse; we are all handicapped—most especially those, the "so-called competent," who are so graceless that they don't even know it. But the truth is we are *not* all handicapped the way Mr. West's young daughter is, and if we pretend that the distinction is irrelevant, or are seduced into believing that there is a spiritual or aesthetic superiority in imaginatively appropriating some of her misfortune, we romanticize ourselves and callowly underestimate both her integrity as a person and her suffering, which by its nature must exceed our own social malaise or various autobiographical dissatisfactions.

Mr. West's daughter, Mandy, was born deaf, brain-injured, and possibly autistic. None of this was discovered until she was already two years old—itself suspect, simply from what parents are ordinarily accustomed to observing in their children's development. Yet this kind of wishful, hopeful denial or disregard is common and understandable, because beneath it, insistent and awful, is the obligation to come to terms with a piece of life that is truly unassimilable, and still must daily be dealt with: what to do with the pain, and with what is never mentioned, the guilt. What Paul West has chosen to do is to push it off and view it through so many coy, overdressed, and dizzying removes that the reader (and

JOHANNA KAPLAN *is a young writer who is also a teacher of emotionally-disturbed children. A collection of her stories will be published by Knopf later this year.*

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probably the writer) can lose sight of the basic anguish and the basic fact: that this little girl is not a "juggler" or a "mystic," not an "imperious queen" or "Miss Rabelais," not "Canute, Boadicea, Mistress of Mini-Babel," as he variously, distractingly pleases to call her, but Mr. West's seven-year-old daughter who cannot hear, cannot speak, and cannot as yet make the necessary childish sense out of a world that's been known to throw even some of "the inhumanly ordinary." That West so frequently indulges in such aggrandized, poeticized name-calling not only denies the child's reality as a child and a separate person, but gives a very good clue as to what the book is really about.

ALTHOUGH it purports to be an account addressed to Mandy of her early years, a letter she might read when her "years of infant Sturm and Drang" are behind her (this form itself arch), the child and the book become a playing field for Mr. West's virtuosic, self-indulgent excesses in language and in attitudes. Mandy's handicap, the author tells us, is something he has come to "welcome" as her "special gift." For whom is it a gift? Not Mandy, clearly, for so cut off is she from the ordinary and essential means of human interchange that to try to understand the function of everyday objects, to give them some kind of place in what is for her an especially confusing world, she must "smell at a pencil newly sharpened, inhaling from the beechwood its own sour-soot bouquet, or trace with addicted fingers the corrugations on the flat of a halved cabbage before eating it raw with the same naturalness with which you [Mandy] drink vinegar, steak sauce and mayonnaise, and sniff glue." It's so *interesting* to be handicapped! So interesting, in fact, that "I [West addressing his daughter] tag along on your voyages of exploration," and "steal your condition . . . like the mystic borrowing the lover's terms, the lover borrowing the mystic's." Steal? A Robin Hood of sorts, Mr. West, spiritually slumming, is willing to steal from the poor to give to the guilty rich.

West's notion of the handicapped child as having and becoming a special gift—she confers grace because she is out of the ordinary—not only suggests an eerie detachment but is profoundly misleading and simply untrue to life. It's the kind of book that can make people wish that they, too, had a "special" child: it would lift them out of the humdrum, give them a chance to prove their sensitivity, and open them up to worlds of fascinating, unique experiences and "exquisite perceptions." All very much like having your own little artist-in-residence, or as Mr. West puts it, "a small envoy to conventional minds."

FOR the world an envoy, for West an occasion to air some self-congratulatory, fashionable musings and newly-arrived-at ideas—new because it is through the Child that he has been led to unexpected self-discovery. Excoriating on the one hand an apparently incompetent dentist, "a Caliban of the needle," who "assumed that because you are deaf, you can be punctured like a Sunday joint, being inarticulate," Mr. West, assuming the same inarticulateness, assigns to his daughter a host of attitudes that no seven-year-old child could reasonably be expected to hold. Describing some of her rituals—rituals involving a consuming need for sameness and order, which are in fact common to, and even symptomatic of, most deeply disoriented children (here described as ventures into elegant and exotic splendors), West concludes: "You'd have understood Samuel Johnson's *having* to touch all the hitching posts as he went down Fleet Street." When Mandy does not react to physical pain, again a sad and baffling effect of her condition—this when she placed her finger in a pencil sharpener and sharpened it until it bled, West explains: "An antagonistic and often histrionic compassion is your life style, as if you think we are all hurt and although you're willing to salute the fact in a civil and sensitive way, loathe all vulnerability." Loathe vulnerability? West positively canonizes it. Mandy, because of her handicap, is related "more closely than most people to Nature." And Nature, being capitalized, and so freed from science, reason, and other shameful blunders of civilization (when Nature goofs, it's mysterious, beautiful, and interesting, like Mandy) has got it far over people, who, except for the "spiritually awake," turn out to be mostly "good folk." You know them, "good folk": sometimes called bad guys; should you reject the scheme of this book, you might one day look into the mirror and find yourself one of them.

"Somewhere between flower power and *satori*, a place for the mentally hindered." Somewhere over the rainbow. How different is this from the old all-those-nuts-in-their-own-world-and-nothing-bothers-them? An easy and thoughtless dismissal of difficulty other than one's own, it suggests that such a condition, being preferable, should be irremediable, and implies at the same time that the "mentally hindered" are a species so apart that empathy would require mental convolutions that only a near-religious passion could bring about. If this were true, the future for children like Mandy would still be as bleak as it once was.

SOMEWHERE, Mr. West knows this: "Not only do I want you to be the supreme Romantic . . . I want you also to be able to go and buy a pound of butter." The most telling inconsistency in this book is that now and then there is the recognition that everyday skills, however much they may interfere with "unsurpassable dreams" and spiritual awakening, are not so undesirable. " 'Words,' " West admits, quoting Samuel Beckett, " 'have their uses.' " Why, then, *mis*use them, as West does, so that meaning becomes an anachronism and language is only a toy? From the spiraling, purposeless catalogues and gaudy, luxuriant descriptions, it is impossible to know what life with Mandy is really like, or how much she can actually understand.

It seems a strange greed, this coveting of mental dislocation. Once, people recoiled from the handicapped, thinking them inferior and repulsive, but inverting an old prejudice is no less of a prejudice, and, as such, does a service for no one.

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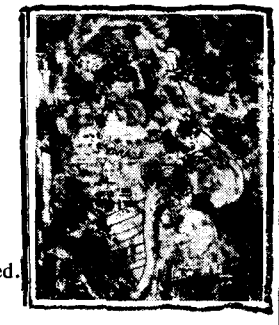

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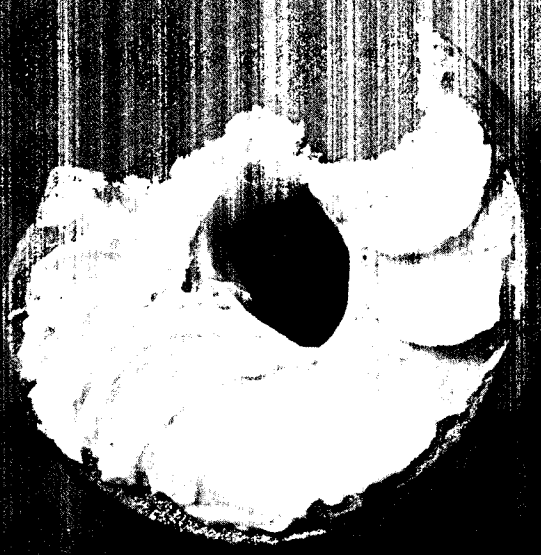

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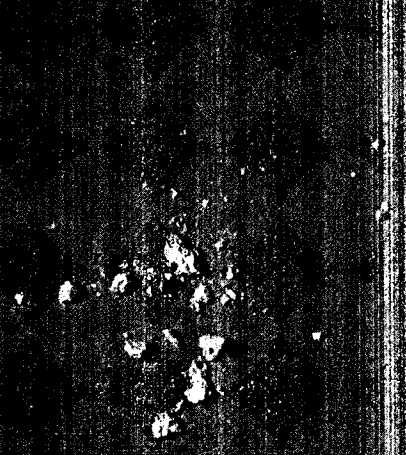

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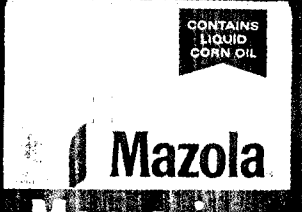

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